The Nation.

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EDITORIAL

THE MAKING OF A WAR

It has been half a year since the Reagan Administration mounted its major military offensive in Central America, but the news is just now getting through. Representatives Edward Boland and Michael Barnes, recently returned from the front, encountered surprise and disbelief when they told their colleagues in a closed session of the House on July 19 that the government's commitment to counterrevolution and subversion is deeper and wider than any press report or official briefing had indicated. The war in Central America is no longer an avoidable option; it has already begun.

As the House met, the most menacing American armada in eighty-five years of imperial intervention in the Caribbean was steaming toward both coasts of Nicaragua. Plans were being made to "quarantine" the Sandinist government and mine the country's harbors. Preparations were in progress to permit a full-scale air war—with American aircraft and *contra* manpower—from Honduran bases against Nicaraguan targets. Reagan's protestations to the contrary notwithstanding, there was overt talk of covert plans to sabotage Cuban-operated military facilities in Nicaragua.

The White House thought out loud about doubling the number of American military advisers in El Salvador, permitting them to enter combat areas and drastically increasing military aid. The transformation of Honduras into one enormous American staging and training base is well under way. The U.S. government is actively encouraging the genocidal repression of Guatemalan peasants by General Ríos Montt, whose regime is arguably the world's most brutal. As for Cuba, Washington is both provoking and threatening open conflict, as Castro begins the thirtieth anniversary celebrations of the revolution.

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Christopher Hitchens

CIVIL WRONGS
Tom Pugh

'WASTE LAND' REVISITED
Thomas Ferguson
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CRANSTON'S APPEAL
Norman Birnbaum

A VICTORIAN MARRIAGE
Phyllis Rose

RUSSIAN BALLET
Mindy Aloff

FREEZING REAGAN

SHOWDOWN AT THE WHITE HOUSE

ARIELA GROSS

Toward the end of April, I received a telegram from Ronald Reagan, congratulating me on winning a Presidential Scholarship. A thousand applications had been sent to graduating high school seniors such as myself around the country based on information (SAT scores, for example) given out by the College Entrance Examination Board, and of those, 121 Presidential Scholars had been chosen by a self-described "independent" Reagan-appointed commission. The applications requested essays on such topics as "social concerns" and "leadership abilities" as well as on our academic careers. Twenty more Scholars were chosen for their artistic accomplishments through the Arts Recognition and Talent Search of the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts.

What we all expected was an all-expenses-paid week in Washington, meetings with politicians and other public figures, a White House lawn ceremony and $1,000 from the Geraldine Dodge Foundation. But we were to get a lot more than we expected.

Many congratulatory letters followed in early May, proclaiming me the future of America, or at least one-141st of it. The thought that kept returning to my mind was: "if we *have* a future."

On May 27, I sent letters and literature about the nuclear freeze to the other 140 Scholars, explaining the responsibility I felt was implicit in the honor and asking them to add their signatures to the statement I enclosed if they shared my fears about the arms race. The statement read:

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LETTERS.

'NATION' LADIES' NIGHT?

Walpole, Mass.

I enjoyed *The Nation*'s Feminist Books issue [May 28] more than any other in recent memory, which makes me sadder than ever that women are so underrepresented in *The Nation* on a regular basis. Many issues feature not even one woman's name on the front page list of authors and subjects. Until *The Nation* starts publishing more articles by and about women, issues like this fine one will smack of tokenism, like Ladies' Night at the local Chamber of Commerce. *Jenny Oremland*

READING 'PLAYBOY'

New York City

I found Barbara Ehrenreich's *The Hearts of Men* fascinating, as did Todd Gitlin ["Where the Boys Aren't," *The Nation*, May 28]. Unfortunately, Ehrenreich's analysis of *Playboy* has one major contradiction, which Gitlin (presumably not a *Playboy* reader) fails to mention. Ehrenreich claims that Hugh Hefner's philosophy advocates the "liberation" of men from supporting financially dependent women. Yet if you (can bear to) look at *Playboy* carefully, you'll see that it is full of pictures and cartoons in which the working woman, the achieving woman and the woman attempting to be independent are ridiculed and harassed. If *Playboy* criticizes women for trying to be independent, while simultaneously promoting the opposite message—that women should not count on a male meal ticket—what then are we females supposed to do? Apparently Hefner is telling us that our only salvation is to become sexual slaves.

Gitlin comments that he wished Ehrenreich had said more about the antifeminists, specifically Marabel Morgan. I urge him to read Andrea Dworkin's new book, *Right-Wing Women* (which I'm surprised wasn't reviewed in the Feminist Books issue). Dworkin's book is a devastating analysis of the implications of the rise of Morgan, Phyllis Schlafly and Ruth Carter Stapleton, among others. It is chillingly perceptive.

Finally, Gitlin rightfully points out that Ehrenreich should have addressed the "psychology of male dependency." An excellent book to add to the two on the subject that he mentioned is Luise Eichenbaum and Susie Orbach's *What Do Women Want*, a much-needed antidote to Colette Dowling's pathetic *Cinderella Complex*.

Lesley Rimmel

S/M AND FEMINISM

New York State

I have to credit *The Nation* for publishing a review of two books about lesbian sadomasochism [Ann Jones, "Fit to Be Tied," May 28]. But I was disappointed in Jones's flippant handling of the subject, about which there is much ignorance and misinformation. Perhaps because she seems not to take the issue seriously, Jones does manage to present both books with a certain impartiality. But lesbian S/M and the furious feminist attacks it has provoked are not as trivial or marginal as she would like to think. If S/M were just a "personal hangup," as she declares, I would sign my real name to this letter. The reasons lesbian S/M has gone aboveground and the reasons it is being so vigorously opposed go to the heart of feminist theory.

Radical feminism has been comfortable dealing with rape and violence against women, issues that stem from women's sexual victimization. But it has not applied the same energy to dealing with women's sexual empowerment—with what we fantasize about, what we like and what we do. There is a wide prudish streak running through feminism, which has made it difficult for those of us who are very sexual, whether straight or gay, S/M or not, to be open about it. Lust, fantasy and passionate, aggressive desire are somehow seen as the property of men. The good-girl myth has yet to be shaken—*we* don't do that, women are *better* than that. Well, I'm not, and neither are lots of other lesbians, and we're finally realizing that feminism has barely paid lip service to true sexual liberation.

What is lesbian S/M about? I will quote the brave and much-maligned Pat Califia: "The basic dynamic of sexual sadomasochism is an eroticized, consensual exchange of power—not violence or pain. . . . The lesbian who self-identifies as a sadomasochist uses roles, power exchanges, and intense sensations for sexual gratification." When I "came out," I wrote this to a gay male friend: "It's about knowing and confronting your deepest self and being totally sexually honest. It's about taking charge of your sexuality and manipulating your most forbidden fantasies. Acting out some of the most basic human power confrontations can be very empowering no matter which position you take, because *you* are the one deciding to do it for *your pleasure*."

As a group, S/M lesbians are the first lesbians I've met who have explored their deepest sexual selves and are not frightened by what they've found. They are women who know themselves better than most, and can say clearly and matter-of-factly what turns them on. Why is it that radical feminists, who demand autonomy and self-determination for women in *all* spheres, who have no trouble trusting a woman to choose abortion or celibacy, won't take my word for it that I am an intelligent feminist who consents to act out my kinky sexual fantasies with women who share those fantasies?

Finally, let me address Jones's misleading conclusion. I don't think S/M lesbians are "mistaking sex for freedom." A great many of us are politically aware and active. (It *is* possible to be both sexually and politically active.) It is also possible, goddess forbid, that the clarity, directness and confidence that S/M sex fosters can be assets in working for social change. Just because you don't see any studded leather collars at your next NOW meeting, don't assume we're not there. *Jessica Josephson*

COEDUCATION IS BETTER

Iowa City

Oh, *contraire*! I must protest the attitudes expressed in " ' . . . And the Rest Are Girls' " [*The Nation*, May 28], be they those of the reviewer, Ann Snitow, or the reviewed, Dale Spender. I feel my education would have been far inferior had I gone to a women's college. Where's the glory in being the best in the class if you've faced only half the contenders? Showing everyone up is much more satisfying to my taste. Occasionally you do run across individual professors who are prejudiced. No matter who (or what) you are, there is someone who won't give you the chance you deserve. All the more reason to excel! . . . *Wendy Barth*

REMEMBERING STAFFORD WARREN

Hanover, N.H.

Col. Stafford Warren was my boss at the Bikini tests in 1946 [Philip H. Melanson, "The Human Guinea Pigs at Bikini," *The Nation*, July 9-16]. In training me and other young doctors of the Radiological Safety Section, he imbued us with a profound respect for this new public health hazard: radioactivity. A conscientious doctor and a strong personality as well, he managed to convince all those admirals that there was real danger aboard the target ships even if people couldn't see or hear or feel it.

You can trust what he wrote. Melanson did a fine job of summarizing Warren's papers. Anyone who would like more detail might look at my book *No Place to Hide*, originally published in 1948 and now being revised and reissued.

The facts haven't changed since the 1940s. I will never understand the Veterans Administration's policy concerning veterans exposed to radiation. It is as though the V.A. has decreed that it is O.K. for Japanese to develop leukemia and cancer, and for residents of the Marshall Islands to have birth defects, but good old honest, upright gum-chewing American G.I.s just don't get any of those things. It's a shameful and dishonest policy. I hope Senator Alan Cranston and others can set it straight.

David Bradley, M.D.

The Nation welcomes letters—typed, double-spaced and no longer than 300 words, please. Letters may be edited for reasons of space.

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EDITORIALS.

Making War

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

War mobilization continues on the political, diplomatic and propaganda fronts. The Kissinger commission, a shameless affront to whatever historical sensitivity and humanitarian instincts remain in America's conscience, was put in place to provide the national security rationale for intervention. "If we cannot manage Central America," Kissinger said recently, "it will be impossible to convince threatened nations in the Persian Gulf and in other places that we know how to manage the global equilibrium." Kissinger's totalitarian vision of America's mission is a matter of record; he spelled out his method of managing the globe in 1970, when he began his campaign to destabilize President Allende's newly elected government in Chile: "I don't see why we need stand by and watch a country go communist due to the irresponsibility of its own people."

Reagan's diplomatic strategy is designed to deflect or ignore all attempts to negotiate a peaceful resolution of the several regional conflicts. Although he condescends to congratulate the Contadora Group (Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela and Panama) for its efforts at mediation, and offers a neutral nod to new Nicaraguan proposals for peace, he stands squarely behind a stonewall. There's no way, he says, that he could ever reach an agreement with the Sandinists.

Reagan's course is extreme, but it does have its own crazy kind of integrity (a grudging compliment originally paid to another Hollywood hype artist, Cecil B. De Mille). Since the confrontations have been provoked and the conflicts exacerbated by American policies, negotiations would neces-

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sarily entail demands that America limit the exercise of its power in the region. As the Administration sees it, however, any diminution of American influence would allow revolutionary movements to succeed and independent governments to flourish. That is out of the question: it is independence, rather than Russian missiles or Communist ideology, that terrifies the President's men.

Washington's propaganda war is in high gear. Reagan routinely characterizes the situation as the first act of Armageddon. No lie is too big to spread, no satellite photos are too blurred to reproduce, no captured documents are too phony to distribute. Jeane Kirkpatrick (whose newest credit is a seat on the Kissinger commission) accuses Nicaragua of military aggression, while the world's greatest military beast slouches south to devour the region. The Administration continues to portray its campaign against Nicaragua—the covert/overt war, the bases in Honduras, the plans for a blockade—as a limited effort to interdict arms shipments to Salvadoran guerrillas, although it long ago stopped manufacturing evidence to support that claim, and it ignores the findings of its own agencies that the Salvadoran rebellion is now largely self-sufficient in weapons.

Wars are infinitely easier to start than to stop, and the American war in Central America is already well out of Washington's control. The committee to re-elect the President, now being formed, apparently believes Reagan cannot "lose" anything in Central America and win a second term. That means the guerrilla offensive in El Salvador must be stopped—by any means necessary. At the very least, Reagan will ask Congress for infusions of money and for vast shipments of military matériel to the feeble Salvadoran regime.

"Winning" means that if Nicaragua is forced to defend its territory by pursuing the *contra* army (now numbering about 10,000 men) back to its Honduran bases, U.S. troops might join the combat at the border. Such battles could quickly escalate into a regionwide war, until Cuba is bombed back to the Batista age—the dream of every American President since Kennedy. Where *that* fantasy might lead is at once too easy and too horrible to contemplate.

In one way or another, the war in Central America will surely widen until an opposition force is formed on the home front that is more broad at the base and dedicated at the top than is now to be seen. Although a close vote was expected in the House on a proposal to cut off secret aid to the Nicaraguan insurgents, Congress for the most part has been doing its usual doggie act, occasionally nipping at the President's bootheels when it is not crouching in passive restraint (also known as bipartisan support). Even Representative Boland could not act on the strength of his personal observations in Central America. The bill he introduced with Representative Clement Zablocki would restrict covert aid in the region while giving Reagan $80 million for an overt program of arms interdiction in Nicaragua and El Salvador. The bill makes a distinction without much of a difference: it legitimizes the specious theory that revolution is "exported" in shipments that leave Moscow for Cuba and on to all points in the Third World. Once that dumb logic is allowed, Reagan can do pretty much what he likes.

Only a handful of senators and representatives seem to be trying to build a consensus against the war. The several Democratic Presidential candidates are still scanning the public opinion polls and state caucus straw votes in hopes of finding popular positions. Only the sepulchral Jimmy Carter, rising from his memory hole one day in Tokyo to attack Reagan's war, has so far sounded like the leader of a peace movement.

But it is still too early to talk about a movement in fact rather than in wishful thinking. There have been impressive but scattered demonstrations against Reagan's Central American policy in the last few years: one of the biggest was a march and rally in Washington on March 27, 1982, which brought out some 50,000 people. There are serious antiwar organizations, such as CISPES (the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador), working to mobilize grassroots opposition, with little publicity except the odd bit of Red-baiting from the mainstream media.

But the passion for peace in the American imagination has largely been focused on the nuclear freeze and disarmament rather than on war in Central America. Nuclear terror is what drew 900,000 people to Central Park last year, what has revived political activity on college campuses and what has produced an unaccustomed peace militancy in middle America.

If there is a way to stop the war now in Central America it is to merge the large antinuclear opposition and the budding antiwar sentiment. A unified movement against militarism makes all the sense in the world, for the cold war in Europe and the hot one in Central America both spring from the same sinister delusions of global management, and both are responses to the irrepressible demand for independence.

Family Affair

What Norman Birnbaum calls the grandparent-grandchild alliance (see page 110) comes alive in this issue. On the cover, Presidential Scholar Ariela Gross begins the account of her confrontation with President Reagan in the White House. On page 110, her grandfather Bertram argues for democratic economic and political planning to meet human needs. Grandfather and granddaughter span three generations of history, but they have in common an utterly contemporary spirit and idealism.

The persistence of idealism and the continuity of struggle are striking features of the Gross family. Bertram, a frequent contributor to this magazine, drafted the Full Employment Act of 1946 and served as secretary of the first Council of Economic Advisers, which that act created. He was left-baited out of the directorship of the Democratic National Committee's research department in 1952, but returned to American political life as the first cold war waned, and helped draft the Humphrey-Hawkins full employment bill of 1978.

His son David—Ariela's father—was an activist at

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Berkeley in the 1964 Free Speech Movement. Another son, Samuel, is a civil rights lawyer (and Stanford University professor) working on constitutional challenges to the death penalty. A third son, Larry, is a gay rights leader in Philadelphia. A fourth son, Theodore, is a playwright; *Crossfire*, his play about Vietnam, will open in Denver in the fall. Last week he was feverishly working on a play about Nicaragua.

The coincidence of two Grosses in a single issue gives us a measure of optimism. This grandparent-grandchild alliance does precisely what Birnbaum predicts: "liberate us from political routines as boring as they are potentially deadly." There is spark and spirit available all around, ready to ignite new ideas and the will to fight for them.

This Ad's for You

The powerful advertising and tobacco lobbies have crafted a new variant on the old "bait-and-switch" sales scam. While they claim to be offering Congress legislation to protect "free speech" and "creativity," they are seeking to protect themselves from the Federal Trade Commission's strictures on unfair advertising. If their demands are met, consumers will be abandoned to sink or swim in a sea of ever more sophisticated sales techniques which prey upon alcoholics, teen-age smokers and impressionable children, to name a few victims.

For the second year in a row, the lobbies, led by the Brown and Williamson Tobacco Company (Raleigh and Bel Air cigarettes), are demanding that Congress exempt advertising from regulations that they charge have been used to censor truthful sales pitches according to the commission's "economic" or "ideological" biases. The companies are referring to the F.T.C.'s "unfairness" rules, which require cigarette advertisements, for example, to inform consumers of the health hazards of smoking at the same time as they tout a brand's smooth taste.

In the F.T.C. rule book, unfairness in advertising is different from truth in advertising. "Tar" content, which can be tested against some scientific standard, falls under the truth-in-advertising regulations, which have not yet come under direct attack from the lobbies. But the health message on a cigarette pack is considered a fairness issue because it involves an interpretive standard: What constitutes a "fair warning" to the consumer?

"We don't think free speech should be curtailed just because someone thinks it is unfair," says Charles Adams, lobbyist for the American Association of Advertising Agencies. "As John F. Kennedy once said, 'Life is unfair.'"

Several rules governing advertising and sales practices would be affected by the proposed unfairness deregulation, including:

§ Requirements now under consideration that cigarette packs carry more frightening health warnings or different warnings on a rotating basis. The F.T.C.'s authority to order such labeling changes comes under the unfairness rules.

§ Requirements that over-the-counter drugs carry warnings of side effects.

§ Rules prohibiting coercion and bullying by door-to-door salespeople.

F.T.C. Chairman James C. Miller 3d, a Reagan appointee, thinks that enforcement of the unfairness rules has been detrimental to business and has not greatly benefited consumers. He does not favor total abandonment of the regulations, as the lobbies do, but he would change the commission's enforcement mandate to require that consumers prove they have suffered "substantial" injuries that "could not reasonably be avoided" before the F.T.C. would move to stop an unfair ad. As for the truth-in-advertising regulations, Miller would change F.T.C. procedures so that advertisers could be prosecuted for lying to or misleading consumers only if they "knew or should have known" that their promotions were false.

Consumer advocates see in all these proposed changes a major assault on the F.T.C. Beginning in the late 1970s, Congress—which had once urged an aggressive F.T.C. crackdown on advertising abuses—began to accuse the commission of overstepping its bounds. In the F.T.C. Improvements Act of 1980, Congress prohibited the regulation of children's advertising (which is considered inherently unfair by most F.T.C. staffers), calling it a threat to parental authority and tantamount to government censorship.

"The advertisers won their war; now they're trying to plow salt into the soil, to make sure 'unfairness' can never be used again," says Bruce Silverglade of the Center for Science in the Public Interest (C.S.P.I.). Recently, complaints about unfair advertising from groups like Action for Smoking and Health and Action for Children's Television have been ignored by the commission, which has retreated from aggressive enforcement action.

In a recent study of liquor advertising, C.S.P.I. found that liquor producers tailor their ads to appeal to problem drinkers—who already soak up 50 to 70 percent of their products. Ads urging consumers to "Bust Loose" with José Cuervo tequila ("Five days a week I'm an account executive; then I bust loose with my team and Cuervo"), "Pour Yourself Some Steel" (schnapps) after a hard day's work (suggested dose: two to four shots per person), or answer the question, "What time today will *you* say 'Grand Marnier'?" (suggested time: 3:06 P.M.) are examples of the psychological manipulation routinely employed by the industry.

The unfairness regulations do not provide ironclad protection for consumers against the advertising barrage they encounter in their daily lives. But the F.T.C.'s authority to oversee commercial salesmanship in the vast area between pure truth and outright lies is valuable and unique. The corporate campaign to undermine that authority is under way precisely because the lobbies involved have a lot to lose.

TRACY FREEDMAN

Tracy Freedman is a staff writer at the Center for Investigative Reporting in San Francisco.

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MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

Touching this "debategate" business, it is possible that the Reagan Administration, which has the luck of the devil himself, can live forever with the howling discrepancy between William Casey's poor memory and James Baker's clear evidence. But it's also possible that there will have to be some kind of hearing. If so, I'd be inclined to put my money on Casey. He is no stranger to hearings, and has emerged scatheless from more inquiries than Spiro Agnew. It's hard to see how this lazy and indulgent Congress can hope to be a match for a man who has made conflict of interest into a way of life.

"Conflict of interest," as understood by the Reaganites, is more a term of art than a term of abuse. Take, for instance, the brief autobiography that Casey submitted to his confirmation hearing before the Senate Intelligence Committee in January 1981. Its final paragraph, headed "Publications," reads as follows:

> Tax Sheltered Investments; Lawyer's Desk Book; Forms of Business Agreements; Accounting Desk Book; Tax Planning on Excess Profits; How To Raise Money To Make Money; How Federal Tax Angles Multiply Real Estate Profits.

Casey was scarcely questioned by the members of the committee, who mostly fell over themselves to laud his sapience. But by December 1981 they had to report on him again. This time, the problem was his taste in deputy directors for operations. Max Hugel, who had been handpicked by Casey for this sensitive post, was accused of dubious stock dealings by his former colleagues. When interviewed by the committee's special counsel, says the report dryly, "Mr. Hugel's responses were circumscribed." As for Casey, it found that he had forgotten to disclose at least nine investments valued at more than a quarter of a million dollars, personal debts and contingent liabilities of nearly $500,000, the fact that he had served on the boards of a number of corporations and foundations, four civil lawsuits in which he had been involved in the previous five years, and more than seventy clients he had represented in private practice in the same period. Among those "clients" were the governments of Indonesia and South Korea and an oil company named Pertamina, controlled by the Indonesian government. The committee, which went through the most abject contortions in order to give Casey the benefit of the doubt, ducked the question of whether his services to Indonesia should have required his registering under the Foreign Agents Registration Act—a formality with which he had not troubled himself. Actually, investigation shows that Casey misled the committee during his confirmation hearing: he was asked in writing whether he had been an attorney for a foreign government and gave a deceitful answer.

Casey remains because he is useful to his political seniors. He has always had the knack of being obliging, and it is surely this, rather than any aptitude for intelligence work, that has recommended him to President Reagan. In 1972, for instance, just before the election, he used his position as chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission to frustrate the inquiry into International Telephone and Telegraph. There were thirty-four boxes of I.T.T. papers under his care, and Congress wanted to have a peek at them. There was loose talk at the time about I.T.T. buying favors from the Nixon Administration. The thirty-four boxes were whisked from the S.E.C. to the Justice Department, and thus withheld from the vulgar gaze. Casey lied about that as well, testifying to Congress that he had transferred the records at the request of Justice Department officials.

Casey's tenure at the S.E.C., in fact, showed us early on that he has two abiding qualities. One, a loyalty to the less fastidious element of the Republican Party. Two, a persistent inability to distinguish between the public and the private interest. He is, really, the only highly placed figure of the Watergate era to retain his prominence in politics. He remembers the heady days of testifying for John Mitchell and Maurice Stans about Robert Vesco. His confirmation hearings as S.E.C. chairman were full of the flavor of that epoch. Casey, it turned out, had been sued by an investor in his firm Advancement Devices Inc., which went broke a year after making a stock offering that the investor claimed was fraudulent and violated Federal security laws. The offering circular was written by a man Casey introduced to the firm, who had once been disciplined by the S.E.C. for price rigging; its fraudulent nature would have been discovered earlier had it been registered with the S.E.C., but Casey preferred not to inconvenience himself by doing that, claiming the offering was private. There are advantages in hiring a poacher as a gamekeeper, but it's easy to overstate them.

In an earlier lawsuit, Casey displayed all the qualities that serve him so well as head of the C.I.A. He was found guilty of purloining and plagiarizing a manuscript on taxation. The real author, Harry Fields, sued for and was awarded punitive damages. The jury found that Casey had acted with "malice and vindictiveness." His attorneys offered to pay a $20,500 out-of-court settlement if the verdict was expunged from the record. In the end, money changed hands and the court records of the case were sealed. Casey lied about this, too, during his confirmation hearings as S.E.C. chairman.

In April 1980, Casey told *The New York Times*, in his capacity as Ronald Reagan's campaign manager, "We expect Carter will try everything to get re-elected. So we'll be ready for everything." That may just have been tough talk. But it is perfectly clear that the Reagan/Bush campaign committee took very few chances and had very few scruples. It used stolen property as a crib. It has been cited by the Federal Election Commission, which "found a reason to believe that the law was violated" in point of contributions. Casey, again, says he knows nothing. He acts the part of the selfless Cincinnatus, abandoning his private life and his honest toil for the public weal. He has been attacked by liberals for confusing private and public transactions, though the truth is that he doesn't know the difference. And he has been criticized for constantly pleading ignorance even though he is in charge of the nation's intelligence network. One begins to suspect that for Reagan, the problem of Casey is not that he remembers too little but that he knows too much.

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SOVIETICUS.

STEPHEN F. COHEN

Every generation or so, Western opinion embraces a new myth about the Soviet Union. The current myth is the "failure and crisis" of the Soviet system at home. Or as Flora Lewis concluded in *The New York Times* two years ago, since its creation in 1917 "the Soviet system has had one great success in building military power and has failed its promises in everything else." That view is accepted by a growing number of Americans on the right and the left, including some Sovietologists who should know better.

If this picture of a crisis-ridden Soviet regime tottering on the edge of an abyss were not so dangerous, it could be dismissed as just another piece of passing foolishness. Unfortunately, it underlies the idea, so popular in the Reagan Administration and other influential circles, that an American policy based on a new arms race and all-out economic warfare will destroy the Soviet Union or "bring it to its knees." Critics of that apocalyptic analysis risk being labeled "appeasers" or Soviet "apologists."

Several factors have contributed to the myth of a collapsing Soviet system, once merely a right-wing fantasy. One is an overreaction to wildly exaggerated claims of Soviet achievements in the 1930s and again after Sputnik was launched in 1957. Another is the mistaken view that current conditions in Poland also exist in the Soviet Union. Yet another is expanded Western press coverage of the Soviet Union since the 1970s, which has focused on the system's internal problems to the exclusion of its strengths.

It is true, to take several well-publicized examples, that Soviet leaders must cope with declining industrial productivity, an unproductive agricultural system, the growing need for foreign currency to pay for huge grain imports and the increasing difficulty of producing oil to earn that currency. However, the following are also true: the Soviet Union's gross national product at least quadrupled between 1950 and 1980; the 1983 harvest seems to be the best in four years; it is cheaper for the Soviet Union to import grain than to produce more; and Soviet oil exports to the West are up almost 40 percent.

But the most misleading assertion is that the Soviet Communist system has utterly failed to deliver on its basic domestic promises over the years. Lacking any popular achievements, it is suggested, the system has alienated Soviet citizens to the point of indifference or even rebellion; the government therefore has no consensual relationship with the people, surviving largely or only because of its military might and repressive power.

Nothing I have learned in years of studying and visiting the Soviet Union, and talking with many sober-minded dissidents, truly supports that picture. Nor would we imagine it to be true of other long-lived political systems, which always develop new sources of stability in older national conditions. All stable systems, even ones as repressive as the Soviet Union can be, rest on a social contract between rulers and ruled—some basic promises and expectations fulfilled, or at worst deferred.

What are the basic promises, the ideological meaning, of Soviet Communism at home? As is clear from both the official ideology and officially sponsored public opinion polls, those promises have far less to do with millennial or libertarian aspects of original Marxism than with five more earthly appeals to the Soviet people that have evolved in modern times. At home, Soviet Communism promises national security (the country will never again be defenseless, as it was in 1941), nationalism, law-and-order safeguards against "anarchy" (which many Russians fear), cradle-to-grave welfarism and a better material life for each generation.

Has the Soviet system really "failed" in those commitments? It has fulfilled, or overfulfilled, the promises of national security and law and order. Russian nationalist-patriotic themes have been integrated into official Marxism-Leninism for forty years, and never so firmly as now. Despite important inadequacies and official exaggerations, a comprehensive welfare system now provides free secondary education, health care, pensions and subsidized housing and food for virtually all citizens. And despite widespread privilege, corruption and shortages, and a decline in the growth of consumption in recent years, ordinary citizens live better than ever before. Between 1950 and 1980, for example, per capita real consumption tripled.

Emphasizing the historical costs of those accomplishments, or contrasting Soviet living standards with American ones, is beside the point. What matters politically is that Soviet adults know those standards and welfare provisions did not exist fifty years ago or less, when illiteracy and famine were rampant. Therefore, they regard them as major achievements of the Soviet system, as Communist promises at least partially fulfilled.

On the other hand, historical achievements usually do not satisfy later generations. Rapid upward mobility is no longer common in the Soviet Union, and economic stagnation and military expenditures already conflict with higher consumer expectations. These and other problems, including nationalistic sentiments among non-Slavic peoples, alcoholism and negative demographic trends, may one day erode the government's social contract with the people, and hence its stability. But to assume that will happen soon, or must happen, is to underestimate the system's reformist potential and popular support. Even the official conservatism that blocks reform is shared by many Soviet citizens, and thus is another bond between state and society.

A Soviet émigré to the United States recently expressed surprise at the opinion that "almost all Soviet people are anti-Communist and hate Soviet power." In an article in the émigré press, recounting his conversations with many "typical representatives of Soviet people at all levels," he called that view a "self-deception." Instead of dangerously deceiving ourselves about the Soviet Union's "crisis" and what it calls Communism, we should ask why a system with so many problems is so stable. The answer may lead us to wiser and more compassionate policies.

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ARTICLES.

'WHITE MINSTREL SHOW'

Civil Rights, Civil Wrongs

TOM PUGH

This summer the Illinois Advisory Committee to the United States Civil Rights Commission (of which I am the chairman) is searching the state for new members—and we are doing it by the numbers. According to the commission, the new members should be more than just capable; they should fall neatly into such categories as black, white, Hispanic, male, female, young, old, executive, union member, jobless, handicapped, etc. Somewhere along the road from intolerance to affirmative action, the Civil Rights Commission developed a fetish about making certain that all segments of society are represented on its advisory committees. At the same time, a lot of Americans, including Ronald Reagan, were trying to figure out why "quotas" for hiring and the like are necessary. Wasn't it enough just to be fair?

That President Reagan fails to grasp the basics of affirmative action is shown by the three nominations he made in May to the six-member commission. All three nominees are white. All three are men. All three are academicians (two are former college presidents, one is a professor). If approved by the Senate, these three white men will sit with two women—both white—in a minstrel show in reverse, presided over by Reagan's black chairman, Clarence Pendleton Jr. And if that is not irony enough, consider the fact that Pendleton's major exercise as chairman has been to issue brief dissenting statements whenever the commission reiterates its longtime support of affirmative action.

The Senate can save the country from further embarrassment by refusing to confirm these latest nominees. In the case of one of them, Robert A. Destro, an assistant professor of law at Catholic University's Columbus Law School who seems more concerned about the rights of the unborn than those of the living, the Senate should have no problem. It rejected him and two other nominees last year after civil rights groups across the nation howled about their credentials. It is less predictable how the Senate will respond to the nominations of Morris B. Abram, former president of Brandeis University, and John H. Bunzel, former president of San Jose State University and now a senior research fellow at Stanford's Hoover Institution. Although both have been described in the press as conservatives who agree with Reagan's opposition to quotas and busing, in decades past both were praised for their positions on civil rights and human rights. People with liberal credentials, no matter how ancient, are desperately needed by the Reagan Administration if it is to make any bid for the votes of minorities and women in 1984.

As that election approaches, it is important to keep in mind the history of the commission before President Reagan brought it to the brink of travesty. Remember that when Reagan comes home to Illinois, many people call him by his old nickname, "Dutch," which is a synonym for "stubborn" in these parts.

The Civil Rights Commission that he inherited from Jimmy Carter, headed by Arthur S. Flemming, a venerable bureaucrat who simultaneously served as U.S. Commissioner of Aging, was one with problems. (Under Flemming, the commission really worried too much about the quota of senior citizens on its state advisory committees.) Flemming was appointed in 1974 after Richard Nixon drove Father Theodore Hesburgh, the president of Notre Dame, from the chairmanship for criticizing the way he waffled on school busing. Ironically, under Presidents Ford and Carter, Flemming devoted so much of the commission's resources to the busing issue that there was often little money left for anything else.

During the Carter years, those of us charged with giving advice to the commission wondered if the President knew it existed. With Andrew Young and other minority advisers, Carter didn't need Flemming to remind him that school busing was heading downhill toward a cliff. Whatever the reason, things at the commission just "slud" during Carter's Presidency; he didn't even try to fill vacancies in an orderly or timely way.

Enter Dutch. One of Reagan's first acts as President was to appoint Mary Louise Smith, the former national chairwoman of the Republican Party, to the commission, a good indication of what he had in mind for that body. But Smith's tenure has been a pleasant surprise. She has never acted in a partisan way, and her conservative Iowa background has not prevented her from being ten times the liberal that Pendleton has been since Reagan kicked Flemming out to make way for him.

Pendleton has been a problem, both for the commission and for the White House staff, which seems to be keeping him away from Reagan. One imagines that Presidential Counselor Edwin Meese 3d has that job, since he is responsible for bringing Pendleton from California into the Washington fold. Pendleton has his own agenda, and it doesn't square with the White House's. Last September he was angered by a front-page story in *The New York Times* reporting complaints about the President's civil rights stance submitted by myself and thirty-two other chairpersons of state advisory committees. We had written the President that we had "deep concern regarding the dangerous deterioration in the Federal enforcement of civil rights taking place in the nation." We said we were distressed at the nominations he was making to various civil rights agencies, and urged him to meet with us.

Tom Pugh, who was a Nieman Fellow and for many years associate editor of The Peoria Journal Star, *teaches journalism at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.*

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DEADLY TARGET PRACTICE

The ability of foreign governments to flood United States consumers with below-cost products results from policies known as "targeting." Briefly, targeting works like this:

A government makes a conscious decision to promote a chosen industry by giving it preferred treatment. This may mean government ownership. It usually includes tax breaks, low-interest loans on favorable terms, outright grants, research and development assistance, import protection, and subsidies not available to other industries.

The targeted industry develops rapidly with this kind of government nourishment. Soon it has the capacity to produce far more goods than its domestic market demands. At this point the subsidized industry looks for foreign markets to dump its excess production.

Because of our high standard of living, the strength of the dollar, and generous "free trade" import laws, the United States is the obvious dumping ground.

When this happens, American manufacturing industries and their workers are the victims. They become targeted for extinction.

Don't think that low wage industries are immune. The consumer electronics industry in the United States is a case in point. Though its wages were not high, that industry lost 63,000 jobs to targeting by the Japanese and other governments.

The latest example of targeting is unusually dramatic. It threatens the whole American steel-making industry—and the iron and coal mines which supply it. U. S. Steel is negotiating to import 3½ million tons a year of steel slabs from the government-owned British Steel Corporation for finishing at the Fairless Works near Philadelphia.

Steel-making furnaces which employ 3,000 workers at Fairless would be closed. Worse, competitive pressure would soon force other domestic companies to close their furnaces and import subsidized semi-finished steel.

U. S. Steel spokesmen have announced that the Company is asking British Steel for a $600 million investment, as its price for this piece of the American steel market. The British government is thus able to take dead aim at this target. No long range planning will be needed—just pay the money and ship the steel.

If the U. S. Steel-British Steel deal is ever finalized, it will violate U. S. trade laws. We will oppose it on this and other legal grounds.

But win or lose on this case, the basic problem will still exist.

America's international trade problem is international targeting.

Let's understand it . . . let's discuss it . . . let's solve it.

UNITED STEELWORKERS OF AMERICA
Lloyd McBride, President
Five Gateway Center
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15222

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Pendleton himself made headlines about the same time by saying the President was amenable to the idea of holding a "black summit" at Camp David. Four days later, at the tail end of a *Washington Post* story (in which Reagan defended himself against the charges), "a senior presidential advisor" said the President had no plans to hold Pendleton's "summit." Much worse than that kind of anonymous insult was a series of articles carried by the Gannett News Service early in May in which Pendleton caught hell for his lavish expense account expenditures in Washington and San Diego. According to the stories, Pendleton was living high at a time when the two organizations he headed—the San Diego Urban League and the Civil Rights Commission—were having severe financial troubles. The most damaging revelation was that "Pendleton permitted the establishment of a business venture in which the San Diego Urban League was used to help create a front for two white businessmen, allowing them to pose as a minority firm and qualify for special preference when they bid for government contracts." It might be said in defense of Pendleton that since he doesn't believe in quotas, he cannot be faulted for helping whites get some of the business that the government was directing to minority firms.

Pendleton often undercuts the recommendations of the commission's reports by issuing statements disputing their findings. Consider the May 1983 report titled "Greater Baltimore Commitment: A Study of Urban Minority Economic Development." The thrust of the 117-page report is that the Small Business Administration and the Minority Business Development Agency should expand their efforts to help minorities in Baltimore. Pendleton argued that "a reduction in the federal role and the revision of its policies would do more to promote local business and employment opportunities for minorities." The report said that only 278 of Baltimore's 6,000 1981 high school graduates had found full-time jobs six months after their graduation. While Pendleton harped on getting the Federal government off the back of black Baltimore, the report said that a $10 million cut in Federal funding had reduced the number of students employed in the city's work-study programs from 27,000 to 530 in two years. Whose side is Pendleton on?

Ostensibly, he is on Reagan's side, and that may become more obvious when the crunch comes on an affirmative action report scheduled for delivery in 1984. Probably the most significant unfinished project in the Civil Rights Commission's mill, the report is tentatively titled "Successful Affirmative Action Efforts." It remains to be seen how successful the commission will be in getting such a document out in 1984 if Reagan runs for re-election, especially in view of the fact that the stated aim of the report is to "document and publicize policies and practices which lead to employment progress for minorities and women, thus countering popular perceptions that affirmative action does not work." Of course, when it comes to perceptions of affirmative action, none are more important than those of Ronald Reagan himself. If the commission cannot succeed in altering Reagan's vision, then unemployment among minorities will continue to rise. How much worse must the situation become before the President recognizes that trickle-down civil rights works no better than Reaganomics does?

The President's views on busing are as flawed as his views on quotas and affirmative action. He seems not to understand that setting quotas or goals is only a way to help members of minority groups move closer to the norms and ideals that he claims to believe in for all Americans. Similarly, he seems not to recognize (or be willing to admit) that a school bus is a vehicle to move children to places where they can get a more equal education. It may be difficult to communicate such complexities to the President, but the Civil Rights Commission should continue to make the effort.

Presidents always take themselves too seriously, and Reagan needs to laugh more at the mistakes his advisers push on him. Here in Illinois, we do not think a Federal case will be made against the advisory committee if we cannot come up with a handicapped Oriental woman union leader for the panel. So we joke about it. But we do not for a moment forget that our goal is to get a wide range of people to work together to end the many forms of discrimination that make America an unfair place. Yes, Reagan ought to laugh about how funny Pendleton and his all-white teammates on the Civil Rights Commission will look. And then Dutch needs to be told that if he had only understood a little more about how quotas work, he could have avoided getting slapped upside the head. □

THE GREENSBORO BOYS

Klan and State In North Carolina

DAVID J. GARROW

Many North Carolinians have heard all they want to hear about the killings of five anti-Klan activists at a Communist Workers Party "Death to the Klan" rally in Greensboro on November 3, 1979. The killers—who were photographed with shocking clarity by cameramen from a local television station—remain unpunished. In a trial a year after the shootings, the six defendants, members of the Klan and the American Nazi Party, claimed self-defense and were acquitted of state murder charges. And the questions that have been raised about possible government complicity in the murders remain unanswered.

But in the past several months there have been important developments in this most notorious case of Southern racist violence since the mid-1960s. On April 21, a Federal grand jury that had been hearing testimony since March 1982 in-

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dicted nine Klansmen and Nazis who had been present at the rally, charging them with conspiracy to violate the civil rights of the victims. All the defendants face sentences of up to ten years if convicted; those among them who are also alleged to have fired the fatal shots could receive life imprisonment as well.

The best-known local figure of the nine is Edward Dawson, a former Klansman, a longtime informant for the Greensboro Police Department and a former F.B.I. informant. Dawson had renewed his Klan contacts at the urging of a city police detective several weeks before the rally, and he rode in the lead vehicle of the Klan-Nazi caravan, which barged into the C.W.P. demonstration. The indictment makes no mention of Dawson's police tie, which he readily acknowledges, nor does it say that any law enforcement agency was involved in, or had advance knowledge of, the events of November 3. Dawson was angry that his informant work had been rewarded with an indictment, but some people would be happy to make him a scapegoat. For the shootings may have been the result of police bungling or failure to act on his warnings about the Klansmen and Nazis' plans.

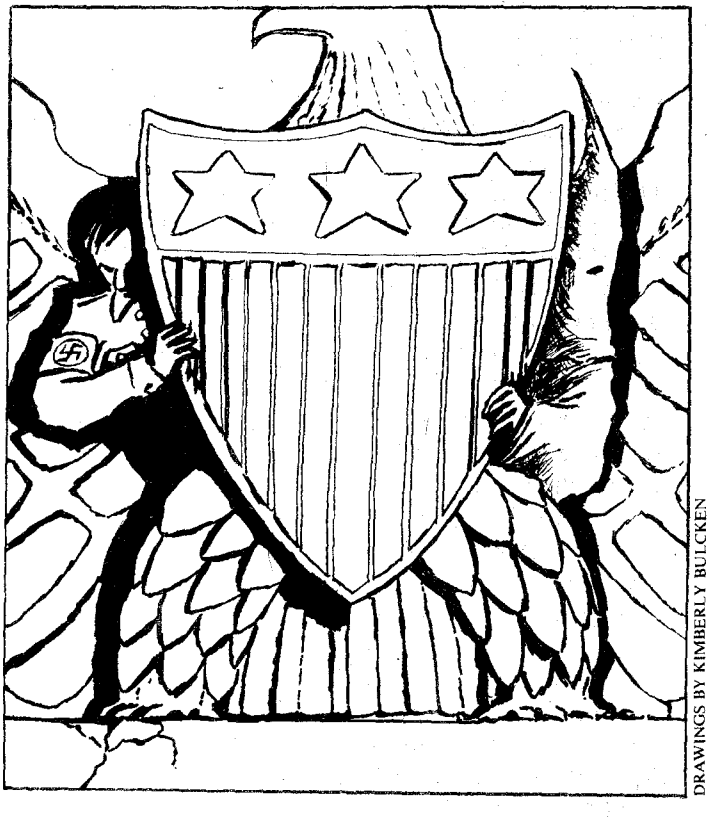
One week after the indictments were handed down, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit overturned the 1981 convictions of six North Carolinians—including one November 3 defendant—for conspiring to bomb several Greensboro locations in the event their associates were found guilty of murder in the 1980 state trial. The appellate court cited the Justice Department's failure to give the six impecunious defendants free transcripts of their earlier trial, which ended in a hung jury.

On May 13, a Federal District Court judge from Minnesota, Edward J. Devitt, was named to preside in the trial of those indicted by the grand jury. The trial, scheduled to begin in the early fall, should be a lengthy one. Immediately upon being named, Devitt issued a sweeping order barring the defendants, their court-appointed lawyers and prospective witnesses from making "any extrajudicial statement or interview relating to the trial, or the parties, or the witnesses involved, for dissemination by any means of public communication." Stunned North Carolina legal observers called the gag order unprecedented. William Lassiter, general counsel of the North Carolina Press Association, remarked, "I can't remember it ever happening in this state."

Fourteen days after Devitt's order, Judge Gerhard Gesell of the Federal District Court for the District of Columbia issued a long-awaited ruling in another matter stemming from the November 3 shootings: a civil suit filed by several C.W.P. members and supporters seeking appointment of a special prosecutor under the provisions of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, to determine if high-ranking F.B.I. and Justice Department officials knew or should have known of the Klan and Nazis' plans in advance. Gesell found that the C.W.P.'s conspiracy claims were "based merely on inferences unsupported by any concrete fact," but he ordered the Justice Department to conduct a preliminary investigation and report its findings within ninety days. He declined to name a special prosecutor, and it is highly unlikely that the Reagan Justice Department will recommend one.

In addition to Dawson, the eight men named in the April 21 indictment were K.K.K. Grand Dragon Virgil L. Griffin; Klansmen David Wayne Matthews, Jerry Paul Smith, Roy C. Toney and Coleman Blair (Johnny) Pridmore; and Winston-Salem Nazis Roland Wayne Wood, Raeford Milano Caudle and Jack W. Fowler Jr. The role of the Klan in the 1979 shootings has been widely reported, and ballistics evidence introduced at the state murder trial established that the fatal shots in four of the five deaths were fired by Klansman Matthews's gun. But more needs to be known about the role of the Winston-Salem Nazis, who transported many firearms to the rally and whose ranks were infiltrated in July 1979 by an agent of the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, Bernard Butkovich. Nazi Party member Caudle recently told *The North Carolina Independent* that at a planning meeting not long before the day of the shootings, Butkovich said, "Well, I wouldn't go unless I had my gun. It isn't against the law to have one locked in the car." Like another undercover B.A.T.F. agent, Michael Sweat, whose testimony was central in the bombing conspiracy prosecution, Butkovich had been introduced to the North Carolina Nazis by the group's state commander, Harold Covington, who has since disappeared.

A key government witness in the upcoming Federal conspiracy proceedings may be Mark J. Sherer, a 22-year-old former Klansman who, according to testimony at the state murder trial, fired the first shot on November 3. A close associate of Grand Dragon Griffin, Sherer has been convicted of armed robbery and cross burning. Several weeks before the grand jury handed down its indictments, he pleaded



DRAWINGS BY KIMBERLY BULCKEN

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guilty to one count of conspiracy. A close reading of the subsequent charges suggests that Sherer provided crucial evidence to the grand jury.

In the wake of the November 3 shootings, most North Carolinians blamed the victims. Many thought the C.W.P. members were seeking martyrdom, and that they got what they deserved. Apparently some public officials still feel that way. "I hope we can go ahead and get this thing behind us," Greensboro Mayor John Forbis told the Raleigh *News and Observer* after the grand jury indictments were issued. "What must always be remembered is that there are too many who have too much to gain by keeping it on the front burner—the Communist Workers Party." There are also many who have much to gain by keeping it on the back burner, and by dismissing the five killings as the result of an obscure feud between rival groups of extremists. The Federal trial may establish that neither the C.W.P. nor Ed Dawson bears primary responsibility for the shootings in Greensboro, but there still will be questions that must be answered. □

BEYOND 'WASTE LAND'

Strategies for A New Economy

If the bad news is that the Democrats' alternative to Reaganomics is industrial policy, then the good news is that there is a democratic alternative to industrial policy. In the June 4 Nation, *Samuel Bowles, David M. Gordon and Thomas E. Weisskopf offered a progressive strategy for revitalizing the U.S. economy. Because we found their ideas worthy of further exploration, we invited readers to respond to their article and the book on which it is based,* Beyond the Waste Land. *Below are the first two responses; others will appear in the magazine in the coming weeks. The series will conclude with a comment from Bowles, Gordon and Weisskopf.* —*The Editors*

THOMAS FERGUSON

Beyond the Waste Land is a brilliant and often strikingly original book that covers a tremendous amount of ground. Because Samuel Bowles, David M. Gordon and Thomas E. Weisskopf's argument is so sweeping—and technically sophisticated—any brief comment is likely to do an injustice to the work as a whole. Nevertheless, I think it is valuable to examine *Beyond the Waste Land*'s account of America's economic decline and its treatment of American politics.

The solutions one proposes to the current U.S. economic crisis are determined by how one assesses the relative importance of two factors in that crisis: the international economy and domestic class conflict. Those who believe that international influences—such as increasing production in the Third World, competition from Japan and other advanced states, an overvalued dollar, the fabulous cost of America's imperial adventures—are most critical will probably spend most of their time reflecting on how the United States can best cope with balance-of-payments constraints, capital market integration, international economic policy coordination problems and peripheral wars. They will focus extensively on the role of multinational corporations, the impact of imports, North-South relations and perhaps even Soviet-American relations. On the other hand, those who identify the erosion of corporate domination at home (manifested in rising worker militancy and increasing community organizing among the poor) as the more important factor will probably worry less about international complications. Like the authors of *Beyond the Waste Land*, they will focus primarily on domestic social reform and what might be termed a "wage-led growth in one country" strategy of social transformation.

Of course, Bowles, Gordon and Weisskopf realize that the United States is part of the world economy. And, considering the complexity of the issues they raise and the fact that hardly anyone else has tried to quantify them, it is almost embarrassing to voice doubts about their analysis of declining corporate profitability and what they call the "postwar corporate system." Yet I do not think that their statistical models sufficiently distinguish the international economy from intensifying class conflict in the United States as factors in the country's current crisis.

The "terms of trade" measure, used frequently as a gauge of the international economy's influence on the United States, has many shortcomings. It fails to take into account the enormous growth of multinational production outside of "home" countries. It disregards international finance. And as a ratio of export prices to import prices, it can be a perverse indicator of the state of the U.S. economy (signaling improvement, for example, when cheaper imports massively supplant U.S. domestic production, or, as has been the case recently, when an overvalued dollar raises the price of U.S. goods in foreign markets while it depresses the economy as a whole).

As the authors note, their measure of the impact of the rising price of raw materials responds both to international economic influences and to domestic pressures for a cleaner environment and safer mines. There is, therefore, no way to disentangle those factors.

Nor is the book's analysis of postwar class conflict in the United States without ambiguity. Though Bowles, Gordon and Weisskopf discuss an intriguing "cost of losing your job" measure devised by Juliet Schor and Bowles, how militant American workers have really been in the last few decades is an open question. Although labor certainly took advantage of the tight job market of the late 1960s and early

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1970s to maintain or raise wages, the unionization rate, as the authors mention, fell slowly during those years, while the strike rate was very moderate by historical standards.

Beyond the Waste Land's analysis of American politics also deserves careful review. While the authors, all economists, display far more political sophistication than most of their colleagues, their discussion of political parties and past American political crises is not informed by the firsthand acquaintance with primary sources and literature that makes their economic analysis so strong.

For example, the book's brief treatments of the political crisis of the 1890s, the Hoover deflation of the early 1930s and the New Deal rely mostly on a traditional "big business" versus "small business" model of political divisions within the business community. And the authors tend to identify virtually every protest group to the left of the Moral Majority as presenting at least an implicit challenge to capitalism.

Such assumptions lead to significant misinterpretations of the dynamics of American politics, both past and present. It is high time the hoary big-business versus small-business approach to American politics (along with its equally superannuated twin, "monopoly" capital versus "competitive" capital) was retired to some intellectual Smithsonian. As Bowles et al.'s discussion of what they term the "corporatist" alternative in the current reindustrialization debate might suggest, this approach is only occasionally helpful. Most important developments in American politics involve major conflicts *within* big business. (These differences generally turn on variations in the degree to which firms and industries are capital intensive or labor intensive, and have conflicting views on international economic policy.)

In assessing the social significance of the environmental and antinuclear movements, one has to remember that dioxin and the Bomb are two of the very few completely egalitarian experiences left in Reagan's America. Or, to put it another way, if one of the Indian Point nuclear reactors in Buchanan, New York, ever melts down, Wall Street and midtown Manhattan, where the headquarters of most of America's mass media are located, will be devastated right along with the Bronx and Harlem.

In many instances, struggles over the environment clearly involve business efforts to shift costs onto competitors, or to gain some special advantage. It was, after all, a railroad struggling with rival waterway interests that "discovered" the snail darter; and makers of catalytic converters have actively supported the Clean Air Act.

Beyond the Waste Land's treatment of labor unions is also troubling. While its stress on the importance of democratic unions for revitalizing the country is welcome, the book does not come to grips with the institutional realities of trade unionism. It deals too briefly with the top-heavy bureaucracies of many American unions and the Reggie Jackson salaries pulled down by most of their leaders. It says little about those leaders' long-established patron-client ties with big business, or their role as cold warriors. And it does not convey any sense of the way violence and fear have entrenched corruption in some unions. Accordingly, while the authors' suggestion that the government should establish a fund to subsidize union organizing efforts is excellent, their further proposal that the A.F.L.-C.I.O. should administer the fund is a grievous mistake. Had such a fund existed in the 1930s, it probably would have prevented the break of the C.I.O. from the A.F.L.

Not least because of these faults in the union movement, *Beyond the Waste Land*'s Economic Bill of Rights should be supplemented by proposals aimed at directly increasing the average citizen's ability to participate in the political process. Most political activity in America is the province of millionaires, or of those favored by foundations and think tanks controlled by millionaires. It is time to recognize that political action is a special form of investment—one which is usually far beyond the means of most citizens.

If people are ever to gain control of their political economy, the cost of participation must be decreased—indeed, even subsidized by the government. The state should assume responsibility for registering voters; legal barriers to third parties (like those that impeded John Anderson's Presidential campaign) must be lowered; and access to the media and campaign financing must be guaranteed.

I confess one final misgiving about *Beyond the Waste Land*. As I hope I have made clear, I found the book immensely stimulating and its analysis very valuable, even when I disagreed with it. But I can hardly help suspecting that any program for fundamental improvements in American life in the 1980s should mention that only a decade ago a mass movement in a democratic country tried to implement

ABSCAM! JOHN HINCKLEY!
WATERGATE! JEAN HARRIS!
BRILAB! KATHY BOUDIN!

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many of *Beyond the Waste Land*'s proposals. Relying on the good will and commitment to democratic values of many people who today are high in the informal hierarchies of both major American political parties, the leader of that movement drew up plans to democratize his country's economy. He attempted to provide the poor with a measure of economic security, and he hoped to introduce a limited degree of economic planning. His name was Salvador Allende. □

BERTRAM GROSS

A year ago America was mired in the wasteland of an empire at bay and vague sloganeering, instead of pursuing alternatives to the "friendly" corporatism of Reagan and the neoliberals. Thanks to Samuel Bowles, David M. Gordon and Thomas E. Weisskopf, it is now possible to take steps toward those alternatives. Progressive Americans should strongly support the authors' principles of wage-led rather than profit-led growth, allocation of economic resources by needs rather than by markets alone and cooperation for domestic and international economic security. *Beyond the Waste Land* provides guidelines for implementing those principles.

Support is also warranted for their effort to establish rights as guiding values for national policy. Their twenty-four-point list of rights (incorporating such policies as price controls and democratized foreign trade) raises the question of how to improve on the eight points in F.D.R.'s 1944 bill of economic rights. Most professional economists are uncomfortable with—and thoroughly untrained for—the task of relating human rights to economic policy. But Bowles, Gordon and Weisskopf have been struggling to transcend economism. All drafters of progressive party platforms and legislative packages for 1984 and beyond should study that list carefully, paying special attention to the "right to a decent job" and "planning to meet human needs."

The former might be better stated as the "right to earn a living," as formulated by the Meiklejohn Civil Liberties Institute in Berkeley, California, and embodied in the Recovery and Full Employment Planning Act being developed by Representative John Conyers and others. Any serious effort to establish that right necessarily leads to *democratic* planning to meet human needs.

But democratic—rather than bureaucratic or corporatist—planning remains to be invented. To do so will require (1) major initiatives by the oppressed (women, blacks, Hispanics, etc.) and organized labor; (2) political coalitions of the lower- and middle-income majority; (3) new organizational forms and new approaches to budgeting and judicial review; (4) wider use of nonviolent militant activism (with civil disobedience when needed); (5) people-to-people communication to escape the constraints of the mass media; (6) leadership styles that do not rely on charisma and machismo; and (7) a U.S. commitment to tension reduction in foreign relations and a new international order based on rising living standards instead of austerity. □

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SENIOR CLASS LIBERAL

Cranston Against The Pack

As the politics of 1984 emerge, we have asked members of the Nation *family for their thoughts on the candidates and the issues in the Presidential race. Their essays will appear from time to time in the coming months. Norman Birnbaum inaugurates the series with an analysis of Alan Cranston.* —*The Editors*

NORMAN BIRNBAUM

The conventional wisdom for 1984 remains firm: if the economy recovers, Reagan cannot lose. The Democrats cannot win if they deviate from the dead center of American politics. The present economic recovery is fragile, however, and may be nothing more than an inventory boom. Even if capital investment resumes, it may eliminate as many jobs as it engenders. Moreover, there are a number of important issues on which Reagan is vulnerable—even if the economy improves. The very opposite of a centrist campaign is required for a Democratic victory. Reagan has fostered the most polarized political climate in half a century. It is a triumph of faith over experience to argue that he can be vanquished by a systematic denial of the country's social conflicts. Indeed, by searching for the center, the Democrats are fleeing toward an imagined America that is only slightly more plausible than the President's nostalgic absurdities.

The supposition that the center will be decisive rests on the view that the electorate will be the same in 1984 as it was in 1980. Should that be the case, an independent candidate like John Anderson could capture the votes the Democrats need for a victory. No doubt, there are voters made uneasy by sharply delineated choices. In order to win, the Democrats need a Presidential candidate capable of mobilizing the disparate strands of opposition to Reagan. They must enlarge the pool of voters, which can best be accomplished by a polarizing campaign.

On the face of things, the most plausible course for Democrats is to support Walter Mondale. His senatorial record was honorable. In the Carter White House he tried to uphold a tradition of economic and social reform about which the President was ambivalent. His record on foreign affairs is less convincing. He surrounds himself with foreign

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policy advisers whose views, with some exceptions, are utterly conventional. His endorsement of a nuclear weapons freeze carries no conviction. Mondale's agenda reads like a shopping list. He lacks the passion needed to mobilize the voters who could insure a Democratic victory.

Then there is John Glenn. No one can complain that he lacks a gift for simplifying complex matters. The question is whether he, like Reagan, believes his own simplifications. Glenn has declared that he wishes to return America to the values of his small Ohio hometown. A majority of Americans, however, live on the two coasts or in big cities: how will Glenn campaign in the South Bronx? There is little evidence he has a vision broad enough to meet the demands of the Presidency. His senatorial record indicates he is unduly credulous about the efficiency and good faith of American business. Glenn talks about improving productivity, but what the country needs is a new version of the New Deal.

There is a more troubling question. Glenn has shown courage in combat and in space, but not in politics. He opposed SALT II when it was first proposed on the technically specious ground of unverifiability. He now supports the treaty, but its approval is no longer on the agenda. Sensing the mood in the Democratic Party, he has called for investment in education, criticized Reagan's policies on Central America and supported a nuclear freeze. He has shown little willingness to move beyond superficial sloganeering. In the end, Glenn's fusion of piety and program may fail. Voters may perceive his program as vacuous, and they may look elsewhere, to Reagan, for piety.

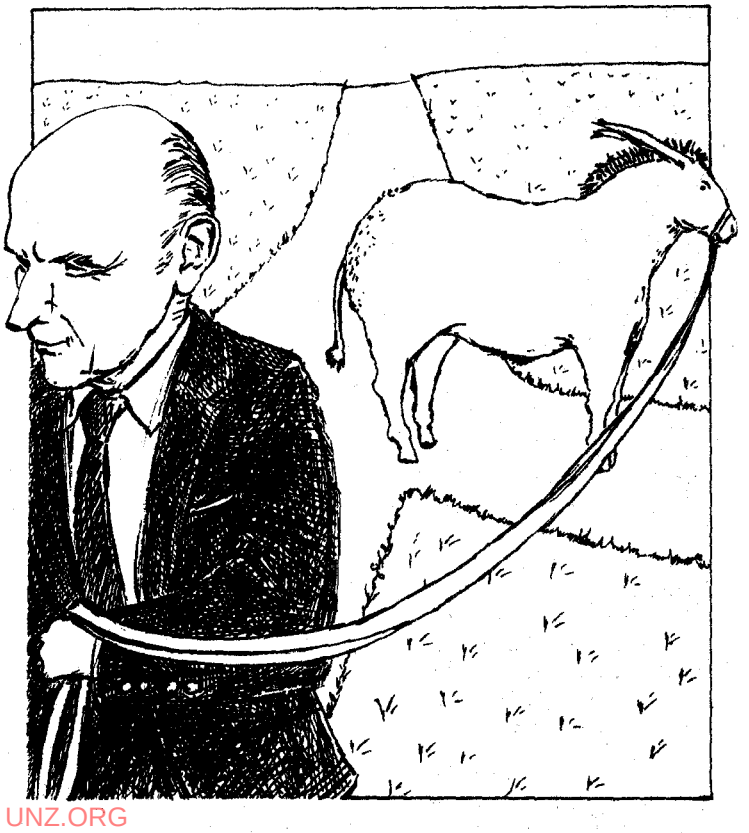
Gary Hart eschews piety. He is overly enamored, however, of technical solutions to political problems. On the Senate Armed Services Committee, he championed small warships over large ones, rather than offering a systematic critique of America's military apparatus and the foreign policy it deforms. He wants to revitalize the economy by fostering the growth of high-tech industries, a position which earned him temporary recognition as leader of the "Atari Democrats." He was quick to de-emphasize the theme, however, when Atari began to move production abroad. Hart's competence and passion are commendable, but he doesn't seem able to communicate an abundance of passion to the voters.

I come to Alan Cranston. There are two Californias—one a refuge for anxious strivers, their homes (and ranches) designed to exclude a troublesome America; the other generous in its vision of possibility, retaining something of the moral expansiveness of the frontier. The parvenu Reagan represents the first; Cranston, a native Californian, speaks for the second. Too much has been made of Cranston's age (he is younger than the President), of his addiction to running and health foods. (When I saw him recently in the Senate dining room, the health food he was eating was roast lamb.)

Cranston's emergence as a leading Presidential candidate makes a brief glance at his career useful. He was a correspondent in Europe from 1936 to 1939. Shortly before World War II, he prepared his own translation of Hitler's *Mein Kampf* because he felt the authorized English translation omitted much that the American public should know, but Hitler successfully sued to stop its distribution. In 1949, Cranston was chosen the first president of the United World Federalists—an indication his concern with nuclear weapons and the fate of the earth is not a recent one. As the first leader of the California Democratic Council, Cranston was responsible for the postwar revival of what had been a moribund state party. In his successful race for State Comptroller in 1958 and in three successful contests for the U.S. Senate, Cranston showed an ability to win by large margins. (In 1980, he ran 200,000 votes ahead of Reagan in California.)

As a Senator, Cranston's voting record on economic, environmental and foreign policy issues marks him as a senior member of the liberal class. He was majority whip for three years and is now minority whip, a tribute to the esteem of his Democratic colleagues. Cranston has made his way as a legislative journeyman. He has not been a nationally prominent Senator like Baker, Kennedy or Jackson, but his California constituents appreciate his work. (Cranston points out that whoever carries California will have 20 percent of the electoral votes needed to win the Presidency.) His standing among unions and arms control and environmental groups is unequivocally high.

There are, no doubt, other senators of whom much the same could be said. As the June Wisconsin straw poll indicated, however, what many Democrats find distinctive about Cranston is his ability to condense issues without vulgarizing them. I saw evidence of that ability on two recent occasions. At an informal discussion between Cranston and a group of liberal Washington technocrats—people who regretfully but invariably tell us why good policies are technically difficult—he said that technical issues are ultimately political issues. Hence, the task of leadership is to state technical matters in political terms. Otherwise, he said, there would be no public



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pressure to find technical solutions, only public indifference to the continuing invention of technical obstacles by elites.

In a conversation I had with Cranston in May, he said he thought the electorate would respond not to a candidate with a list of discrete solutions to isolated problems but to a candidate with a view of the whole. In his campaign, Cranston has concentrated on arms control and foreign policy issues, on the necessity of establishing an ongoing dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union. To counter the charge that he is overly concerned with such issues, Cranston has begun speaking more about the economy and the environment. If elected, he says he will convene a business-labor-government panel to recommend measures for achieving full employment—which he defines as 4 percent unemployment, though most economists set the figure two or three points higher. If there is no progress toward that figure six months into his Presidential term, Cranston says, he would not hesitate to initiate a public works program. Presumably he has in mind the programs recently proposed by the machinists' union, but Cranston must say more on these matters—and emphatically.

For better or worse, in the American system candidates are generally more important than their programs. Cranston's sense of essentials and his ability to speak to the various parts of the Democratic coalition without losing sight of the interests of the party as a whole make him an unusually attractive candidate. There is something appealing about his insistence that we can master our problems. The fact that he is a senior citizen makes his candidacy more compelling.

Perhaps an alliance of grandparents and grandchildren could liberate us from political routines as boring as they are potentially deadly. Conventional wisdom questions whether the Democrats can win with someone as far to the left as Cranston. The more realistic question is whether the Democrats can win with a candidate to his right. □

Showdown

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

Dear Mr. President:

As Presidential Scholars, we feel honored to represent American youth, and gratified by your confidence that we shall play a part in shaping the future of this country. We cannot, however, accept this high honor without voicing our most profound fears for the future itself. We therefore call upon you, Mr. President, to make every effort to halt the nuclear arms race that endangers the tomorrows in which we hope to fulfill our dreams of today.

We, the undersigned, endorse, and urge you to endorse, the nuclear freeze proposal outlined below. Such a proposal, with various amendments and revisions, has already been passed by the United States House of Representatives as Joint Resolution 13, on May 4, 1983.

The Freeze Proposal: To improve national and international security, the United States and the Soviet Union should stop the nuclear arms race. Specifically, they should adopt a mutual freeze on the testing, production, and deployment of nuclear weapons and of missiles and new aircraft designed primarily to deliver nuclear weapons. This is an essential, verifiable, first step toward lessening the risk of nuclear war and reducing the nuclear arsenals.

Before I received any responses in the postpaid envelopes I had included with the letters, I began to get "urgent" messages from the White House. Gary Stember, executive director of the Commission for Presidential Scholars, spoke to my mother on the telephone. "Do you know what your daughter is doing?" he demanded. "Does she know that her scholarship could be revoked? Does she know that her name could be marred as a radical? Does she know that she could endanger the entire Presidential Scholars program?"

A long night followed. My mother was naturally very upset and worried, even more so because my father was on his way abroad for physics conferences, and could not be reached until the end of June. I decided that I was willing to give up the award, so long as that did not mean the commission succeeded in shutting me up. I wanted to find out if the story was newsworthy, so I called the Associated Press and asked if they were interested. But I was a little naïve about dealing with the press.

Mr. Stember called me back early the next morning. His approach was much less heavy-handed. He was just a nice guy warning me how his nasty higher-ups in the Department of Education and the White House would react if he notified them. If he didn't, he told me, his job was on the line. He'd worked ten years for this! Ten years ago, President Nixon canceled the program when a Scholar publicly rejected the award, saying he would accept it "when you get out of Vietnam." Who could expect better of President Reagan?

Mr. Stember wanted me to promise that I would take no action at the White House "ceremony of medallions" on June 16 (it sounded to me like an ice show). I told him I could make no promises, but assured him I planned nothing disruptive or disrespectful. Regardless of my feelings about President Reagan, I respect the office.

I called the A.P. back to explain the situation, and to ask them to hold off on the story until Mr. Stember had informed his superiors. But the A.P. had just spoken to Mr. Stember and others at the Education Department, and the story was going out over the wire. I called Mr. Stember again to let him know the story was coming out and to apologize; he told me he had already spoken with James Baker at the White House and Secretary of Education Terrel Bell. He did not tell me their reactions.

Minutes later, I found out why. I received a call from Tom Andersen, counsel to Secretary Bell, assuring me that my First Amendment rights came first, and that Stember was merely an "out-of-line employee." The Department of Education had released a memorandum stating, "We cannot allow the students and their parents to be intimidated because of their political views. . . . These students obviously retain all of their rights to express their views and seek out others who may share those views." Mr. Andersen reminded

Ariela Gross lives in Princeton, New Jersey, and will attend Harvard University in the fall.

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me that the purpose of the Scholars program is to honor us, and that nothing should detract from that. I explained that my action would not detract from the honor, but enhance it.

In the following week, fifty Scholars responded to my letter. Of these, half checked "I support the freeze and will sign the statement" and wrote lovely, enthusiastic letters. Ten others checked "I am interested but need to know more" and asked earnest questions about the freeze. Most of the remaining responses were "I oppose the concept of freezing the nuclear arms race." One Scholar sent a five-page typed letter with twenty-one footnotes. A few, however, challenged the propriety of my statement. One student wrote:

> No one wants a nuclear war. I feel, however, that the President of the United States has more information and is in a better position to judge when the time is right for a freeze. I also fear that demands from citizens groups for a freeze would weaken our bargaining position in any talks that might take place. I therefore do *not* want my name included on your list. In fact, I DO NOT THINK AN ISSUE SUCH AS THIS SHOULD BE MENTIONED ON AN OCCASION SUCH AS THE ONE PLANNED FOR JUNE 16 TO HONOR US.

I answered:

> The suggestion that in a democratic society citizens should not hold views nor express them to their elected representatives because these officials have superior judgment is fundamentally flawed. The very foundations of democracy rest on the principle that the representative takes his authority directly from the people who elected him (see Preamble to U.S. Constitution). I, for one, will be voting this November, and I could not cast my ballot if I felt, as you stated, that I were in no position to judge the issues of the day.
>
> Another point that I found unsettling was your fear that "demands from citizens groups for a freeze would weaken our bargaining position in any talks that might take place." I hope you are not suggesting that our democratic tradition of discussion and dissent is a weakness rather than our greatest strength. The Soviet Union must repress its people in order to appear strong at the bargaining table, but we must not. (I might add that that is one reason why the Soviets sometimes appear "ahead": an army of reluctant patriots is ultimately not a strong one.)

As soon as we arrived at our welcoming picnic dinner in Washington, I heard the whispers: "Which one is Ariela? Who's the one who wrote us the letter? There she is." As people realized who I was, they began to talk openly about the freeze and about my plan to present my statement at the ceremony. Several Scholars approached me and said they had successfully gauged the feelings of the majority, and felt comfortable speaking for that majority. The majority, they said, supported the freeze but could not support my statement. I would, of course, compromise? What good would a single-signature petition be? We ended up in shouting matches, and I could not discuss the issue with one person without twenty others attacking me.

We listened to three speeches in which Mr. Stember and his advisers drummed into our heads why we were there ("not for your political views"), what sort of award this was ("just an honor—not a responsibility"), and how incredibly tight White House security is ("*no* gifts for the President!"). Each of these statements was rewarded with riotous applause.

On Monday, June 13, a story appeared in *The New York Times* under the headline "For Scholar and Protester Hard Road to White House." I first saw it when it was thrust into my hand by an NBC reporter as his cameraman began shooting. Our buses were met by cameras and tape recorders wherever we went. Many of the Scholars were resentful, and when Metromedia filmed three of them verbally attacking me, I broke down and left the group.

Dave Sheldon, chief adviser to the program, took me in a taxi to Georgetown University, where we all were staying. We sat in my room to talk it out. Dave, a 1981 Scholar, told me that he was my friend, that others might understand the commission, or the Department of Education, or being a Presidential Scholar, or the press, but only *he*, Dave Sheldon, understood all four. He also explained that Mr. Stember would lose his job if he spoke to either me or my mother, and that Beverly Fisher White, the chairman of the commission, had invested millions of her own money in the program, so everyone was terrified of her. He then told me not to tell anyone what he had just said.

We reached an "agreement" whereby I would issue a statement to the press reading, "I will present the letter to whomever presents me with my medallion on Thursday. I'll see you all on Friday" (Dave's wording); the commission would give me time to address all the Scholars and would keep them from interrupting or heckling me; and I would present the letter to Secretary Bell, who would be handing out the medallions.

But at dinner, Dave told me that "there was no official time for me to address the Scholars." He kept repeating that one line, and I asked, "But what about everything we talked about?" He looked at me meaningfully and said, "*They'll all be there* in Copley Hall [the meeting hall of our dormitory]." Evidently, he wanted me to speak anyway, but refused to take responsibility for it. I ran off and found a phone, and called my mother. I told her that I was not accepting the award, I was coming home. She said, "You are in the right, and you cannot give up! Don't think you'll be a martyr by coming home."

I returned to the dorm to pack, only to find Tom Malinowski, a friend from home, on the doorstep. (He said that when he had asked to see Ariela Gross, he had been told, "Oh, they're not letting her out.") He persuaded me to call Mary McGrory, the *Washington Post* columnist. She gave me a pep talk and urged me to see Representative Ed Markey and to attend the anti-MX rally the next day on the Capitol steps.

At Markey's office, Peter Franchot, his administrative assistant, invited me to come along to the rally. I heard Senators Kennedy, Cranston and Hollings speak; also Randall Forsberg, the originator of the freeze proposal, Helen Caldicott, the head of Physicians for Social Responsibility, and Representative Barbara Boxer. I heard them blast the members of Congress who had voted for both the freeze and the MX: "You should be ashamed of yourselves!" I heard Representative Tom Downey ask the crowd, "Is this good

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policy?" And I heard them answer, "NO!" Then Representative Markey said, "I don't know if you have read the newspapers, but there is a high school girl here in town who is trying to give a petition to the President for the freeze . . . she has become a kind of national symbol for me. . . . I know she's here right now and I'd like to ask her to say a few words."

I had nothing planned, but I began, "I have heard today some wonderful women speak of a country for the children by the people and of the children of the people, and I am here to speak for those children and those people!" The rally gave me back my perspective on "what it's all about." It is not about intimidation, propaganda and the worship of decorum. It is about solidarity, compassion and peace.

That night Mr. Stember announced that "whoever wants to speak to Ariela Gross can meet in Copley Hall at 10:30 P.M." About ninety Scholars showed up. They formed a huge semicircle around me and I began to speak. I told them I wanted to clear the air a bit. I read a few of the letters I had received, using no names: one enthusiastic response; one very religious, undecided response; and one respectful but negative response. I said, "Because of the hostility that has charged the air, I have not been able to speak to a single one of these people. Where are you? What happened to you?" Then we opened up the floor, and Ruth Hobaugh, a Scholar from Heidelberg, appointed herself mediator.

Since Secretary Bell had been quoted in *The Washington Post* that morning as saying, "Miss Gross has every right to do what she plans to do," no one questioned my legal rights. Instead they suggested that I did not have a moral right to present the letter. I said that I believed I had a moral obligation to present it. But they were in the *majority*, several explained. "Majority does not determine conscience," I repeated over and over. Well, all right, I had the right, but only so long as it didn't infringe upon the rights of others, which it did. Which rights? They couldn't find one. Finally, they decided it was the right to the pursuit of happiness, a new addition to the Bill of Rights. This went on until midnight.

Steve Hellman, a Scholar from Arizona, announced he planned to write a letter to President Reagan apologizing for my actions; it would reach the President through a friend of Steve's. I remarked that some of us don't have such channels to reach our elected officials.

Other Scholars seemed to feel that I should take responsibility not only for my actions but for their possible effect on others (e.g., the cancellation of the program). Some also suggested that Mr. Stember shouldn't be criticized too roughly for his threats. "Until he met you, how could he know who you were? For all he knew, you could be some kind of *radical* or something." I gasped. "*Radical*!!" My attempt at humor was lost on the group. I said, "Are you suggesting it is good that Mr. Stember acted out of complete ignorance?" They still believed that his threats were unimportant, the act of a single individual, ignoring the fact that he is an Administration official.

I felt completely isolated until one girl from Illinois, Kim Crawford, rose to my defense and asked, "Do you lose *who you are* when you become a Presidential Scholar?" Several answered, "Yes, I guess you do." At that point I walked out. What was the use of talking if I had to give up who I was for "the program"? Half an hour later, I went back, and fifteen Scholars were still there. They finally agreed that if they did not feel my letter was appropriate, they should not sign it, but they should not stop those who wanted to sign. The next day I collected signatures from thirteen Scholars who quietly indicated that they were interested. Senator Cranston and Representative Markey took copies to insert in the *Congressional Record*.

At 10 o'clock on Thursday morning our bus arrived at the south gate of the White House. My letter was in a large manila envelope in my hands. Our bus was met by Tom Andersen, who asked me to step into the limousine that had just pulled up. "Don't worry," he said. "No one's going to tear that out of your hands." He explained that we were going to talk things over with some people at the White House.

We pulled in at the west gate, left the limo and received our identifying "dog tags." Mr. Andersen told me we were going to meet Craig Fuller, assistant to the President in charge of Cabinet affairs. He gave me a minibiography of Mr. Fuller and said what an important man he was. Then the three of us sat down for a chat. What state was I from? Wasn't it a hot day? Could Mr. Fuller see the petition? Of course he could. Very nice, very nice. Would I like to present it to the President himself, in private? "The President is addressing me by having his representative present me with the Presidential Scholar medallion, and I would like to address him at the appropriate time," I said. "You're missing the chance of a lifetime," warned Mr. Fuller. Then he asked if I wouldn't like to meet the President for a few minutes. Mr. Andersen and Mr. Fuller stood up. Why didn't I just come up this stairway?

Before I knew it, I was in a room with President Reagan, Mr. Fuller, Mr. Andersen, a Secret Service man and four White House television cameras ("You'll want pictures of yourself meeting the President"). I shook hands with the President. I hesitated a moment and then handed him my letter. He skimmed it, then folded it and put it in his breast pocket. He thanked me and told me that he shared my concern for world peace. I asked if he would answer a few questions on the subject. We sat down ("The Vice President has just been warming the seat for you"). I noticed a jar of jellybeans at my elbow. From what I have heard of the layout of the West Wing, I think we were in the Oval Office, but I did not notice a fireplace behind us.

President Reagan explained to me that the Russians are up here (he motioned with one hand) and we are down here (he motioned with the other), and that's a *window of vulnerability*. "But Mr. President," I interjected, "the Scowcroft Commission, which you yourself appointed, showed that there is no window of vulnerability." The Scowcroft Commission, he said, recommended building 100 MXs in order to keep peace through strength.

Peace through strength, I said, is a deterrent policy. But the MX missile is not a defensive weapon; it's a first-strike weapon. The Russians, Mr. Reagan told me, already have many first-strike weapons. For about ten minutes, he offered numbers showing how far ahead the Russians are. At

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first, I tried to think of figures to rebut his figures, but finally I dismissed them all. When I had the chance, I said, "Mr. President, you are using a lot of numbers to prove your point. I have a lot of numbers to show that we're at rough parity with the Russians. We can each talk about throw weight, kill capability, number of missiles, number of warheads, land-based missiles, submarines. Numbers are tools. That is not the issue." His answer was, "I've seen your numbers. Do you know where those charts come from? Your numbers are phony." He repeated the word "phony" several times. The President also had handy a quotation from an old Soviet military manual, which proved that the Russians want to take over the world. He explained that, as President, he has access to more information than the average citizen and is therefore in a better position to judge the issues that so immediately affect people's lives. "I have the same argument with my daughter all the time, believe me."

Finally, Mr. Andersen indicated that it was time to get back to the ceremony. Everyone began to rise. "Mr. President!" I said. "I just want to ask one more question. We have been sitting here talking about military strategies, strategies for a war that cannot be won. But what if, *what if*, the freeze proposal was passed? What if we offered the Soviets a freeze? What do you think would happen? What are you so afraid of?"

President Reagan did not answer my question. "Do you know who first suggested a freeze, in 1964?" he asked.

"Leonid Brezhnev," I answered.

"The Soviets want a freeze . . ." he continued.

"So? That's terrific! They want a freeze, we'll have a mutual freeze, that's what we want, then they'll comply!"

". . . because they have an advantage now," and he returned to his "window of vulnerability" speech.

We shook hands again. Mr. Andersen grabbed the President's hand and exclaimed, "It's such an honor to meet you, Mr. President! I really love what you're doing!"

"Who did you say you were?" the President asked him.

As we walked out, several other aides converged on the President and said, "Good work! We love what you're doing, Mr. President." Before we descended the stairs an aide pointed out the Cabinet room to the left: "Great decisions are made there."

We walked to the South Lawn, where the ceremony proceeded without interruption. Watching Secretary Bell, I noted with amusement that handing him a letter could never have been a disruption, since he spent a few minutes conversing with each Scholar as he went by.

President Reagan kept us waiting a half-hour before he came out to give his speech. He congratulated us briefly and then addressed our concerns about nuclear weapons. It was the same speech I'd heard. He did add a few sentences about being "proud of a country" that keeps itself strong and "the responsibility to be right" that accompanies "the privilege of free speech."

The other Scholars decided not to post the letter they had discussed apologizing for my actions. In fact, many said they intended to write to the President explaining that though they did not sign my letter, they support the freeze. They were concerned that the freeze movement would be hurt if it was thought that it has the support of only 10 percent of "the best and the brightest."

The next morning, my last in Washington, I was in Copley Hall with two Art Scholar friends and we found the informal questionnaires that all the Scholars had filled out. Since they were anonymous, and the results were to be tabulated and sent to us anyway, we glanced through a pile of about eighty or ninety of them. Only two Scholars described themselves as other than "fairly" or "strongly" conservative; only three as Democrats (the rest as Republicans); only one as nonreligious (most of the others were "deeply religious"). For the most part, their parents were Republicans, and the living person they most admired was Ronald Reagan or Margaret Thatcher (although several indicated Richard Nixon). I found it interesting that of a pool of 1,000 students chosen solely on the basis of numerical scores, a Reagan-appointed commission, after reading application essays in which they discussed their politics under the heading of "social concerns," should have selected a group so overwhelmingly Republican, conservative, religious and pro-Reagan.

Since my return from Washington, I have received hundreds of letters, from every state, from the very young and the very old, from the rich and the poor—enthusiastic, hopeful and excited by what I did.

I was very disillusioned by the Presidential Scholars program, but these letters have restored my faith in this country. This summer I will travel around the nation talking to young people about the freeze and urging them to register to vote for peace candidates in 1984. On July 12, a nationwide student voter registration drive for peace was kicked off in Washington, and it will continue under the name SAVE (Students Allied for Voter Education) our Future. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

A MARRIAGE OF EQUALS?

Mr. and Mrs. Mill

PHYLLIS ROSE

John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor were married in 1851, twenty years after they had met and fallen in love and two years—the conventional period of mourning—after the death from cancer of Harriet's first husband, John Taylor. For twenty years they had been platonic lovers, devoted to each other's company but forced to hide their friendship from the public as much as possible. People who had hoped that Mill's marriage would mark his re-entry into social life were dissappointed. He lived in even greater retirement after his marriage. Neither he nor Taylor had any trouble giving up the tepid pleasures of society, for they found each other absolutely fascinating. Both had been made lonely by exceptional intelligence, and they rejoiced in each other like two giants, two midgets or any two people who had feared their oddness would prevent them from ever knowing close companionship. They were a happy couple, discussing everything, sharing everything. Most important, they shared Mill's work—or what posterity calls Mill's work, despite his insistence that virtually everything published in his name was Harriet's as much as his.

Mill believed that when two people think and talk together about everything, whatever writings may result from those discussions are joint products. It is of little consequence which of them holds the pen. "Not only during the years of our married life," he wrote in his autobiography, "but during many years of confidential friendship which preceded it, all my published writings are as much my wife's work as mine." *The System of Logic*, published in 1843 and the basis of Mill's fame, owed little to Harriet except felicities of composition, but after that, everything we call Mill's was a joint production: *The Principles of Political Economy*, *On Liberty*, *The Autobiography*, *The Subjection of Women*, the essays on religion. Some of those works were published only after Harriet was dead, but they had been discussed, drafted, planned and in some cases dictated by her long before their actual publication.

Taylor's co-authorship of Mill's work has proved a hard fact to swallow. Commentators have labored mightily to prove that Mill was mistaken about Harriet's role and to provide reasons why he might have been mistaken about a subject—the authorship of his own works—on which he ought to have been an expert. The sociologist Alice Rossi has examined a century's worth of resistance to the idea that Harriet could have collaborated with so clear, logical and forceful a mind as Mill's and concludes that it is sexist: Harriet provokes hostility from Mill scholars because, being brilliant and aggressive, she does not conform to their standard of femininity. (Harriet had been active in Unitarian intellectual life in London and contributed articles and poems to the Unitarian *Monthly Repository*, until she discovered she preferred to work with and through Mill.) Moreover, various kinds of political bias have affected assessments of Harriet's role in Mill's career. Unitarians in the nineteenth century—Harriet's friends—were enthusiastic about her influence on Mill, whereas the utilitarians, who saw her as removing Mill from their orbit, tended to be harsh on her; later, Harold J. Laski downplayed the importance of Harriet's role in Mill's thinking because he did not want Mill's socialism to appear the result of a mere woman's influence. "Though it is couched in terms of detached scholarship," says Rossi, "one senses in Mill scholars an unwitting desire to reject Harriet Taylor as capable of contributing in any significant way to the vigor of Mill's analysis of political and social issues unless it included some tinge of sentiment or political thought the scholar disapproved of, in which case this disliked element was seen as Harriet's influence." More recently, every serious scholar of Mill's life and work has taken Mill at his word. "In so far as Mill's influence, theoretic or applied, has been of advantage to the progress of the Western world, or indeed of humanity at large," says Mill's biographer Michael St. John Packe, "the credit should rest upon his wife at least as much as himself."

Consider, for example, the enormously influential *Principles of Political Economy*, begun in 1845 and ready for the press by the end of 1847, when Harriet was still married to John Taylor. Harriet read and commented on every paragraph. She thought that the first draft lacked a chapter on the future of the working class, and Mill accordingly wrote one to her specifications. She helped him, too, with the proofs, with arranging for the binding and in negotiating a contract with the publisher. When the time came for the second edition, Harriet wanted more. She wanted Mill to change his mind on a long-held, well-thought-out and important opinion—his belief in capitalism as the most desirable system of ownership.

In the first edition, Mill had grounded his opposition to socialism and communism (little distinction was then made between the two) on the conviction that men worked best when they worked in their own interests and in the hopes of accumulating, by their own efforts, rewards. He feared that when subsistence was guaranteed, motivation to work would disappear. He argued that people who had never known freedom from anxiety about the means of subsistence are apt to overrate it as a source of pleasure. Under socialism, "labour would be devoid of its chief sweetener, the thought that every effort tells perceptibly on the labourer's own interests or those of someone with whom he identifies himself." Rereading this paragraph, Harriet objected strongly and totally. Perhaps the revolutionary events of 1848 had helped to change her mind, or perhaps the Chartists had made her more optimistic about the ability of the working class to direct its own economic and political life. Whatever the reason, she believed it was of the first importance to guarantee people a living and to remove their anxieties about subsistence.

Mill was astonished. The paragraph she objected to had been inserted at her suggestion and in her very words. Moreover, he considered it the strongest part of the argument. If it were removed, the most cogent objection to socialism would disappear and he would have to turn around and embrace it. Never-

Phyllis Rose teaches English literature at Wesleyan University. This essay is taken from Parallel Lives: Five Victorian Marriages, *which Knopf will publish in November.*

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theless, he neither pressed Harriet for an explanation of her change of mind nor attempted to re-argue his earlier position. Placidly, he accepted the correction: "This is probably only the progress we have always been making, and by thinking sufficiently I should probably come to think the same—as is almost always the case, I believe always when we think long enough." His complex portrait of some weaknesses of socialism was replaced by bland pieties in its favor: "There would be an end to all anxiety concerning the means of subsistence; and this would be much gained for human happiness." And so there entered into the *Political Economy* a utopianism much more typical of Mrs. Taylor than of Mill and an endorsement of socialism that had enormous impact through the decades, making England a little bit of what it is today because Harriet Taylor changed her mind in 1849.

The man who had been trained to think for himself from the age of 5 informed Harriet that he would change any opinion if she asked him to "even if there were no other reason than the certainty I feel that I never should continue of an opinion different from yours on a subject which you have fully considered." He thought himself fit only to interpret, to set down what others believed, insisting again and again, in his private diary as well as his letters and autobiography, that Harriet was the source of any wisdom he had, and he merely her mouthpiece. "What would be the use of my outliving you!" he wrote to her. "I could write nothing worth keeping alive except with your prompting." In the production of some of his most important works, he took the position of a schoolboy fulfilling an assignment. "I want my angel to tell me what should be the next essay written. I have done all I can for the subject she last gave me." And:

> I finished the 'Nature' on Sunday as I expected. I am quite puzzled what to attempt next—I will just copy the list of subjects we made out in the confused order in which we put them down. Differences of character (nation, race, age, sex, temperament). Love. Education of tastes. Religion de l'avenir. Plato. Slander. Foundation of morals. Utility of religion. Socialism. Liberty. Doctrine that causation is will.

Practically all Mill's later work may be seen in that shorthand list of ideas. Where he began did not much matter, so long as he began, and Harriet was

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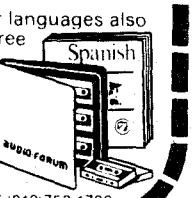

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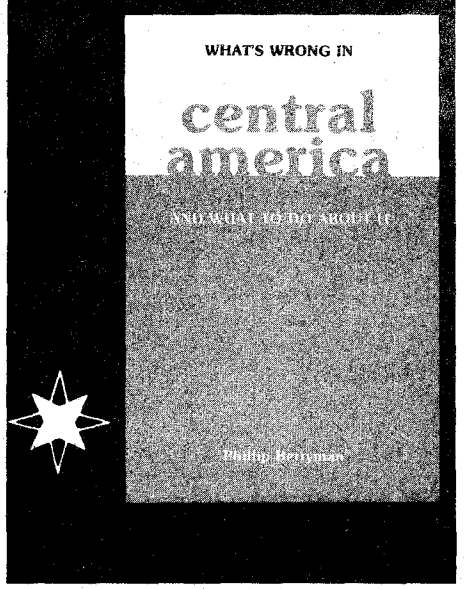

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happy enough to tell him what to do. She was the executive. Unhampered by the subtleties and nuances of thought that sometimes impeded Mill, unafraid of inconsistency, she cut crudely, perhaps, but emphatically and practically to important matters. "About the essays, dear, would not religion, the Utility of Religion, be one of the subjects you have most to say on?" He could, she suggested, account for the nearly universal existence of some kind of religion; could show how religion and poetry fill the same wants, the need for consolation, the craving for higher objects; could suggest how religion must be superseded by a morality deriving its authority from the approval of people we respect rather than from hope of reward in an afterlife. It was fairly standard positivist stuff, but Mill responded ecstatically. "Your program of an essay on religion is beautiful, but it requires you to fill it up—I can try, but a few paragraphs will bring me to the end of all I have got to say on the subject." Nevertheless, he wrote the essay which was posthumously published as "The Utility of Religion."

Almost everyone who talked to Mill agreed that his mind was one of the amazing phenomena of the age, so clear, so productive, so just, so inexorable. (In fact, he is reported to have had the largest brain size known to science.) But it had a defect Mill alone perceived. It initiated nothing. He was like an automaton which functioned perfectly when set on course, but could not set its own course or turn itself on. So Harriet, spontaneous, imperious, intellectually passionate, without self-doubt, put the logic machine into motion. She was his starter button. She was "Feeling," mysteriously energizing, mobilizing "Thought." When she died he would say that the spring of his life was broken, and the metaphor was absolutely right.

The world does not take kindly to a successful collaboration between a married couple. When John Lennon insisted on making records with Yoko Ono, he was accused of glorifying an inferior artist and she was accused of destroying a great artistic unit. Alice Rossi's feminist explanation of the hostility Harriet Taylor evoked might account for some of the passion aroused by Yoko Ono, too. But cases exist in which men are resented for intruding on women's careers. Opera lovers will perhaps recall the initial resistance to Joan Sutherland's demand that her husband, Richard Bonynge, conduct whenever she sang, and—at the other end of the cultural spectrum—the resistance to Barbra Streisand's elevation of her lover Jon Peters from hairdresser to producer. A collective jealousy seems to be at work here. The public, whose relationship with any celebrity (writer, philosopher or film star) is partly erotic, resents anyone coming between it and the object of its attention, and any artist who insists on giving more credit to a loved one than the public thinks is appropriate risks the public's wrath.

Such was the tactical blunder John Stuart Mill committed in writing his autobiography, three years into his marriage. At the time he was suffering from consumption, and he thought it was his last chance to make the world see and appreciate "one whose intellect is as much profounder than mine as her heart is nobler." Most autobiographies are written as a defense of self; Mill's was written as a defense of his wife. Usually read as a conversion story or political testament, *The Autobiography* seems instead a monument in the annals of Victorian domesticity. It demands comparison with a narrative like *David Copperfield*, which asks in its opening sentence whether David will turn out to be the hero of his own life and makes clear by the end that he has not, that his wife has filled that role.

Attempting to win recognition for Harriet, Mill overstated the case and evoked only disbelief and scorn. Alexander Bain, Mill's friend, believed that if Mill had scrupulously listed the ways in which his wife had collaborated with him, he would have been believed and Harriet respected. Unfortunately, says Bain, "he outraged all reasonable credibility in describing her matchless genius, without being able to supply any corroborating testimony." Reading a proof of *The Autobiography* in 1873, Bain begged Helen Taylor, Harriet's daughter and Mill's executor, to remove some of the more fulsome references to her mother. The incredulous world, he said, would be startled enough by what remained. He had in mind passages like the following, in which Mill describes Harriet Taylor as she was in 1832, and which her daughter allowed to stand:

> I have often compared her, as she was at this time, to Shelley: but in thought and intellect, Shelley, so far as his powers were developed in his short life, was but a child compared with what she ultimately became. Alike in the

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> highest regions of speculation and in the smaller practical concerns of daily life, her mind was the same perfect instrument, piercing to the very heart and marrow of the matter; always seizing the essential idea or principle.

Bain also found distressing Mill's assertion that his father, the utilitarian philosopher James Mill, had no equal among men in his impact on progressive thought, and only one equal among women. Nor did he like the passage about Carlyle that ends with Mill calling Harriet "one greatly the superior of us both—who was more a poet than he, and more a thinker than I—whose mind and nature included his, and infinitely more."

It is possible to create a context in which such passages seem less glaring. Mill overestimated Harriet's mental qualities because they were so different from his own. Also, he tended to categorize people as Thinkers or Feelers, and to such a man the highest praise would naturally be to say that the eulogized one combined both virtues. Since Mill thought of poetry as a mode of feeling rather than a feat of writing, he did not perceive the ludicrousness of comparing Harriet to Shelley. He meant that she felt as deeply as Shelley did, not that her poems were as good. (The most outrageous of all Mill's hyperboles about Harriet fortunately did not make its way into his autobiography nor present itself to the attention of that dry Scotsman, Alexander Bain: in 1855, writing from Italy, Mill sent New Year's greetings to "the only person living who is worthy to live." Diana Trilling, writing in *Partisan Review* in the 1950s, called this a transgression difficult to forgive even in the name of neurosis.)

It is pointless to read Harriet's scraps of verse looking for a mute inglorious Shelley, or to compare her fragmentary essays with the prose of Carlyle. Even her surviving letters—most of them were destroyed at her request—offer no convincing evidence of her genius. They are often confused, contradictory, bossy, intolerant of other people's faults but unaware of her own. Mill's contemporaries could see no resemblance between the genius described in the autobiography and the woman they knew. Some said Mill was the only person in the least impressed with her. Some said she wasn't even bright. Some said Mill thought she was brilliant because she parroted back to him his own thoughts and words. All agreed there was a great gap between the reality of the woman and Mill's vision of her, and his autobiography, insofar as it described Harriet, has generally been taken to represent the strength of his feelings rather than to portray accurately the object of them.

Of course he made her up, as we all make up the people we love. Mill's delusion about Harriet *is* his love for her and, written all over his autobiography, it makes that book, sympathetically read, one of the most touching love stories of the nineteenth century. The more ordinary Harriet Taylor was, in fact, the more impressive the spectacle of a man projecting upon the world the lineaments of an inner need.

If Mill's autobiography fails to make us see the woman he saw, the chapters describing his childhood enable us to understand why he saw her that way. The blueprint for loving was drawn, and drawn powerfully, by his father, who at one level was teaching his son to think for himself but at another was training him in exactly the opposite behavior, drilling into him with every lesson the feel of domination, the surrender of will to one stronger than himself. How well Mill understood the experience of subjection would become clear in his sympathy for the plight of women. His early experience led him to resent subjection but also to experience it as the most intense connection between two people. It seems therefore inevitable that Mill would be drawn to a woman who made lavish use of rebuke and reproach, someone stronger than himself, someone controlling, whom he endowed with all the qualities he felt himself to lack: deep feeling, intuitiveness, passion.

Mill may have been like most people in creating imaginatively the person he then fell in love with, but he differed in being able to present her to the world as both philosophically and politically significant. Philosophically, Harriet represented the cure for the emptiness of eighteenth-century rationalism. Politically, she represented the fate of intelligent women—underutilized, underrespected, prevented from achieving what she might have if positions were determined by talent and not by accidents of birth. If circumstances had been encouraging, Harriet *could* have been a great artist. She *could* have been a great orator. Her knowledge of human nature and her cleverness about practical life "would, in times when such a *carrière* was open to women, have made her eminent among the rulers of the world."

In his exorbitant praise of his wife,

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Mill seems at times to be apologizing for the collective disadvantage of the female sex, assuming the collective guilt of the male. And if the outrageous statements about Harriet's genius are not quite a tactical maneuver, designed to suggest women's potential and their systematic discouragement, they may be interpreted in a way that does not wholly represent the effusions of love. As one of the keenest students of power in modern times, Mill could not have been unaware that in his dealings with Harriet he was altering the usual allocation of power between the sexes. He must have realized it was unusual for a man of his stature to claim that he had merely written down what a woman had dictated.

The nineteenth century's most important theorist of feminism was concerned not to reproduce in his own life the historical iniquities of his sex. He would not be the conventional husband, assuming his own dominance within the family, the ruler of a microcosmic state with Harriet as his subject—the situation that Dickens, in his role of apologist for the patriarchal family, idealized in his novels. Between Taylor and Mill, power would be shared, the reins held jointly. They were embarked upon a great experiment, something new in the history of relations between men and women—a true marriage of equals. But so unusual was this situation that for Harriet to be anywhere near equal she had to be "more than equal." Think of their marriage as a domestic case of affirmative action: to achieve equality, more power had to go to Harriet, in compensation for the inequality of their conditions.

Mill intended both the fact and the written portrait of their friendship, and later of their marriage, as a revolutionary act. However, in setting up woman as ruler, he was tracing an ancient pattern more accessible to ordinary minds—the man besotted by love into yielding his rule to a woman, Hercules with a distaff, a figure of fun for centuries. What Mill saw as a daring political gesture seemed to others no more than a grievous case of uxoriousness. Bain's words emphasize the political infraction at the heart of the offensive spectacle: "Such a state of subjection to the will of another, as he candidly avows and glories in, cannot be received as a right state of things. It violates our sense of due proportion, in the relationship of human beings." One wonders if a similar subjection of a woman's will to a man's would have violated Bain's sense of due proportion to the same degree. And if a woman wrote about her husband as extravagantly as Mill wrote about his wife, would she be so violently accused of hallucination about her husband's personal qualities? Nevertheless, Bain has a point. "Such a state of subjection . . . cannot be received as a right state of things."

How splendid it would be if we could find in the Mills' marriage what they hoped we would find, an exemplary model. But in practice, a female autocrat replaced the usual male. In their daily life as in their collaboration, he obeyed her in all things. If he was willing to change his mind at her request on such issues as the relative merits of socialism and capitalism, the secret ballot and capital punishment, he was certainly willing to drop his old friends Mrs. Grote and Mrs. Austin when Harriet asked him to. He had been close to them in his youth. He would see them again after Harriet's death. But she did not like them, and that was enough to keep Mill from them during her lifetime. When his mother's property was divided among her children at the time of her death, Mill thought to refuse his share since he had been on such bad terms with his mother since his marriage. But Harriet rebuked him. To refuse £500 was a species of vanity only a rich man could afford. Of course he should take the money. Of course. "As your feeling is so directly contrary, mine is wrong and I give it up entirely," he wrote.

The pattern of rebuke and abdication repeated itself in the most minute of their household affairs. Once, in Harriet's absence, their neighbor wrote Mill that rats were infesting their shared garden wall. Mill replied with a bland acknowledgment of the receipt of the note and reported his action to Harriet. She was furious. Mill ought to have replied aggressively, throwing the rats back upon the neighbor, making them his responsibility. And so, in his next note, Mill did. He never knew how Harriet would react. That was part of her fascination. Expecting reproach, he was praised; expecting praise, he was rebuked. "Age cannot wither her nor custom stale her infinite variety," Shakespeare wrote of Cleopatra, who also had the gift of contrariness.

Harriet died a mere seven years after they were married. But since she was to such an extent a character in his imagination, their marriage did not have to end with her passing. Mill proved to be a mourning fetishist, like Queen Victoria, who continued to set out Albert's shaving water after his death. Harriet had died in Avignon, on one of her yearly removals to the south of France in search of health. Mill bought a house overlooking the cemetery where she was buried and spent more and more time there every year. He hired an architect to design a tomb, for which Carrara marble was especially imported. The vast and perfect piece of stone that made its way slowly by ship to Marseilles and then up the Rhone to Avignon proved big enough only for the covering slab, and more marble had to be ordered for the sides. When finished, in March 1860, the tomb had cost about £1,500, an entire year's salary for Mill.

Every day when he was in Avignon, Mill spent an hour by the grave. Away, he did the work Harriet would have wanted him to do. She continued to guide his life. It was, in a sense, satisfactory. As with Petrarch and Laura, Dante and Beatrice, Auguste Comte and Clotilde de Vaux, the woman who had inspired great work as well as great love died into the condition of pure, disembodied inspiration. Moreover, to Mill's great comfort, Harriet had left a daughter, Helen Taylor, 27 at the time of her mother's death. She would be Mill's companion for the rest of his life. "Surely no one ever before was so fortunate, as, after such a loss as mine, to draw another prize in the lottery of life—another companion, stimulator, adviser, and instructor of the rarest quality." Whether she was, as Mill claimed, "the inheritor of much of [Harriet's] wisdom, and of all her nobleness of character," we will not attempt to discover. Certainly she took Harriet's place in the way most necessary to Mill, by providing someone he could obey.

Brought up an atheist, trained to distrust any authority outside himself, a man who scorned in every way the notion of one person surrendering his will to another, Mill nevertheless felt as one of the profoundest needs of his emotional life the need to do precisely that—to surrender the will. In imagining that being what some would call henpecked constituted a utopian marriage of equals, he created a delusion which he and his wife could happily share. He invented a role for her that she liked both in theory (she liked the idea of equality) and in practice (she liked the feel of mastery). Her subject was willing. Mill's mind approved

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equality but his soul craved domination. He atoned for the subjection of women by the voluntary, even enthusiastic, subjection of one man, and portrayed the result as a model marriage of equals. □

DANCE.

MINDY ALOFF

Nineteen eighty-three will go down in dance history as the year both George Balanchine and Edwin Denby died, but it is also the 200th anniversary of Leningrad's Kirov Theater of Opera and Ballet. Called the Maryinsky Theater under the czars, it is this institution that nurtured Balanchine and almost every other distinguished Russian ballet dancer one can name. Last month, a small band of American dancers, dance writers and balletomanes set out together on a pilgrimage to the Soviet Union, intent on seeing the Kirov at home.

Our trip to Leningrad coincided with what are called the White Nights, when light saturates the city from about 5 A.M. to midnight; many European tourists visit at that time, and a yearly festival of the performing arts keeps the theaters full. We saw more than a dozen performances in the Soviet Union, including six by the Kirov Ballet. We saw every dancer of note in the company, with the disappointing exception of Altnai Assylmouratova, the corps member whose dancing created a sensation during the Kirov's Paris tour last year. (While we were in Leningrad, Assylmouratova was preparing to dance the title role of "Giselle.") Although the Ministry of Culture didn't officially recognize all the writers among us as working press, we were able to meet with company directors, choreographers, teachers, ballet historians and ballet enthusiasts. A few of us were introduced to dancers, although it soon became clear that the government is especially wary about American journalists meeting young Soviet performers of international reputation who might have Western leanings.

Although the Kirov Ballet is 200 years old, the theater itself is only 123. Like many of Leningrad's most important buildings, it suffered damage during World War II; the brilliance of its interior is due partly to careful maintenance and partly to reconstruction. The dove gray walls are lavishly decorated with gold; the velvet hangings and upholstery startle the eye with a stinging azure blue—the same blue used to represent the heavens in the mural of dancing muses on the ceiling and in the mural of dancing putti on the proscenium arch. The giddy front curtain, by Golovin and Virsaladze, a painted *trompe l'oeil* fantasia of billowing swags and embroidered drapes, adds an ironic touch. Then the curtain rises, and you gaze on a company comprised of the most exactingly schooled and coached ensemble of classical dancers in the world.

The first thing you notice about a Kirov dancer is the line of the body. From there, you zero in on the back. It is as active as a limb. It controls her actions and is the site of her expressive effects—imperiousness, melancholy, joy. In the United States, only Merce Cunningham makes as much of the back as the Kirov school does, although his technique and imagery are so different that you may prefer not even to make the comparison. The Russian classical back is not an ageless tradition like the *khorovod*, the chain dance alluded to in "Swan Lake" and "Serenade." It is the invention of one person, Agrippina Vaganova, a Kirov soloist who began to teach at the school during the 1920s. By the 1930s, Vaganova was on the way to consolidating her reforms of the classical technique she inherited from Christian Johansson and Nicholas Legat; eventually she would be recognized as *the* great figure in the training of Soviet dancers, and the Kirov school would be called the Vaganova Choreographic Institute in her honor. Again and again I was surprised by how tangible her achievement still is. The dancing of the Kirov's prima, Irina Kolpakova, the last ballerina to have been guided by Vaganova personally, is as much a part of Leningrad as the indolent caryatids on its buildings, the statues of noble horses in its squares, the sunburst pattern on the ironwork of its windows. Kolpakova does not have an ideal body for ballet: her face is too large, her neck too short, her torso too blocky. But the strength in her waist and spine—the same contained and quiet strength apparent in photographs of Nijinsky's torso—is such that her knees and ankles appear to bear no weight. When she performs a traveling step like embôité en tournant across the stage, she appears to be sliding along on one level, like a hydroplane. She is a classical dancer of such purity that her "Giselle" misses a tragic dimension. The mad

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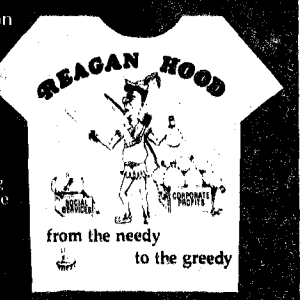

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scene has no emotional affect because the girl who opens the door to Albrecht's knock is already a Wili.

Kolpakova is 50 years old. Behind her are the ballerinas Alla Sizova and Gabriel Komleva, both exemplary classicists who came of age during the late 1950s and early 1960s, an especially fertile time for Russian dancing. Both Sizova and Komleva have a gift for unexpected phrasing; they create priorities among steps in the same way that, in conversation, one stresses some words over others, so that phrases rather than syllables are heard. With these dancers, too, one thinks of Vaganova, of the heroic control in the spine and pelvis necessary to attain the freedom in the arms, legs and head for such a panoply of scaled effects. Their adagio is lovely: I can't forget Komleva in "Chopiniana," her face completely still, her elbows quieted against her body, her cupped hands virtually marble, as she pitched forward in slow motion to convert her upright arabesque to an arabesque penchée. But their forte is the vivid allegro dancing that Vaganova preferred.

Between those stars and the Kirov's other treasure, its perfectly matched female corps de ballet, are younger ballerinas and soloists of varying gifts. Some, like Olga Chenchikova, the ballerina in "Paquita," can execute steps of supreme difficulty with unbelievable ease. However, even Chenchikova isn't surprising, like Sizova or Komleva. The largest or most physically demanding step is the one she's most apt to accent. And none of the younger ballerinas quite convey the impression that their weight is lifted entirely off their legs. Nor do the men of the company, with the exception of the young soloist Sergei Vicharev.

The Kirov must consider him special: ballets are already being choreographed to showcase him. The one we saw was "The Star Boy," which an announcer said was based on a story by Oscar Wilde, but which looked like Walt Disney to me. As with most of the new Soviet choreography we had the chance to observe, even when the steps were drawn from the classical syllabus, they weren't combined in a way that gave the dancers the rhythmic drive to dance. It wasn't until we watched Vicharev the next night in nineteenth-century works—the "Paquita" suite, the "Napoli" *divertissement*—that he could show us his technique and we could perceive him as a dancer. Even then, it was a question of academic information: the accuracy of landings, the extensiveness of turnout, the purity of silhouette in air, the clarity of port de bras. The play, risk and ingenuity of the senior dancers seems beyond their juniors. Publicly, Russians will tell you that the company is passing on its performing traditions just as it has always done, and that it simply takes awhile for technicians to flower into artists. Still, watching the discrepancy between generations night after night, one can't help wondering whether some secret has been lost.

Or abandoned. In their ballet as in their society, the Russians are deeply ambivalent about their past. Losses are always with them. During this century alone, Russian historians remind us, twenty million Russians died in World War II, and millions as well through civil war and internal repression. Their sense of history, its links and its vacuums, is keen. On the one hand, there is an enormous push to preserve and reconstruct the art of the past—much of it czarist—with complete fidelity. Leningrad, one third of which was leveled by the Nazis, has been restored stone by stone. On the other hand, there is a competing feeling that everything must start anew, that "yesterday is over," as Muscovites like to say. The irony is that humans tend to regard as most spirited that which is most amenable to being broken down, reconceived and rebuilt. The palaces and churches have little significance in everyday life, and so they are restored "exactly as they were." The ballet, half art, half sport, is another matter. And so, despite historians' objections, the urge to alter it according to current taste continues.

It is one of history's ironies that Western productions of Petipa, like those of the Royal Ballet, are probably more loyal to the spirit of the original than are the Soviet productions. Although the Kirov's "Garland Waltz" from "Sleeping Beauty" is probably closer, step for step and pattern for pattern, to the original Petipa, it seems sluggish, while the version that Balanchine mounted with the New York City Ballet for the 1981 Tchaikovsky festival, with its unsentimental pace and streaming imagery, is a vital tribute to the composer. According to Oleg Vinogradov, artistic director of the Kirov, a new production of "Sleeping Beauty" is now being prepared under the supervision of Kolpakova and in consultation with Petipa specialist Peter Gusev. But, asks Vinogradov, how much mime should be reinstated? How much will modern audiences tolerate?

Another thing the Kirov seems to have lost is the ability to dance at the tempo specified by the composers. As indelible as its production is of "Chopiniana," the company is practically at 45 rpm in passages where Chopin would have them at 78; and in the performance of "Swan Lake" I saw, starring Galina Mezentzeva as Odette/Odile, 78 was slowed down to 33⅓. Vinogradov spoke of mounting a "Balanchine evening" with the two ballets every Russian adores, "Serenade" and "Symphony in C." But at the moment, the company would need to take transfusions of amphetamines to dance those works.

Throughout our stay in Leningrad, Balanchine was very much on our minds. Every icon was a potential enrichment to his ballets, every turn in the Hermitage might bring us closer to some key to his imagination, as, in the British Museum, one roves the collection of Greek vases looking for the one that might have inspired Keats. My breath caught when I saw the children's mazurka in "Paquita," not only because of the charm of the children's dancing and the delicious transference of adult characteristics to small bodies, like bonsai trees, but also because Balanchine himself had once danced that mazurka, and might have drawn on his experience of dancing it as a child in some unusual choreographic context.

In the special graveyard for artists and musicians at the Alexander Nevsky monastery, one paused before the graves of Petipa and Tchaikovsky, thoughts flying. Tchaikovsky's tomb is dominated by a sculptural grouping in black stone: an angel with huge, outstretched wings hovers over the hollow-eyed bust of the composer, as, seated below, another angel sings from a score. Was this the origin of the "Dark Angel" section in "Serenade"? Of the angels in the "Adagio Lamentoso"? Farther off, the grave of Petipa, the simplest in the entire necropolis, lay under dappled shadow. The marker is a light stone oval, gently tilted, like the Kirov stage, and garlanded by what had once been a border of tended flowers and is now one of insect-eaten weeds. The inscription, in Cyrillic letters, reads, "Marius/Ivanovich/Petipa/1822-1910/Balletmaster." Lightly etched below that are two crossed sprigs of laurel. Petipa is the only dancer given a place at the Nevsky monastery. As Balan-

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chine might have said, it's nothing fancy. But for me it's just right. □

THEATER.

RICHARD GILMAN

Ohio Impromptu
Catastrophe
What Where
Great Days

Samuel Beckett's plays have grown increasingly short, to the point where "playlets"—or "dramaticule," as he's called at least one—is a more appropriate term for them. Beckett is the great master of less is more, of the fertile silence and the echoing nuance; no other living dramatist is so free of cant, sentimentality and verbal fuss.

If he now sometimes gives the impression of parodying himself or, less harshly, of working and reworking familiar materials, it doesn't much diminish my pleasure in his work. The three playlets that make up the current Beckett bill at the Harold Clurman Theater offer us nothing really new—except perhaps a somewhat more explicit note of political concern than before—but they're nevertheless a delight to see and hear.

Ohio Impromptu, which was written for and first performed at Beckett's seventy-fifth birthday celebration at Ohio State University a couple of years ago, is a two-character piece in which a reader, R (beautifully played by David Warrilow), reads to a listener, L (Rand Mitchell), a tale of love fading and finally dead. The first line is "Little left to tell"; the last is "Nothing left to tell." Between those so characteristic utterances lies the story and something more: the fact and nature of storytelling itself, of literature, something composed, sent out, received.

Visually, *Ohio Impromptu* is striking, if a little portentous, as are all three plays, which Alan Schneider has directed with strict fidelity to stage directions but a trifle too much atmosphere. The two men sit at right angles to each other at the end of a long table, in the center of which is a black wide-brimmed hat. Both have long white hair and are dressed in long black coats; they shield their eyes from the light and remain almost immobile throughout, except for an occasional rap on the table by L, which serves to start the reading again after a

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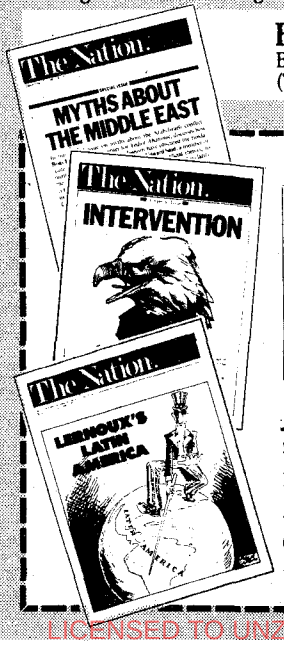

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pause. The men are mirror images of each other, the point being that so are writing and reading: the tale told, the tale heard.

Catastrophe is dedicated to Vaclav Havel, the dissident Czech playwright, and is perhaps Beckett's most overtly political work. A "protagonist," clearly a figure for the writer or artist, is fixed under a spotlight as a black-robed living statue, which a "director," an impresario-like personage in fur hat and fur-collared coat, and his "assistant" arrange, tinker with, fuss over ("Whiten his hands," the director orders) in an almost pure allegory of exploitation. At the end an oration is heard from an invisible audience as the piteous creature sags from his frame. The piece reminded me of Kafka's story "The Hunger Artist" (the chief difference being that in the earlier tale of the artist as performer and scapegoat, the action is voluntary, whereas here it's the result of extreme coercion), and of the Pozzo and Lucky speeches in *Waiting for Godot*: the mind at the end of a rope, intellect enslaved.

If any of these plays is self-parodic it's *What Where*. The characters are named Bam, Bim, Bem and Bom, and there are lines like "We are the last five" (there's Bam's "voice" too) and "I am alone. Time passes. That is all." The shadowy characters move in dim light enacting a tale of some mysterious assignment to get "him" to say "it" after having been given "the works." "What must he confess?" is asked several times but never answered.

A clue is that the main figure, a prosecutor or inquisitor, keeps editing his words. He says something, expresses displeasure at it, starts again, calls it "good" and goes on. Another allegory of writing and reading, with "the works" referring to an *ouevre* and also to the old gangster term for murder, the point being that writing and literature can be used to deceive and oppress. I won't push it. The play's last lines are "That is all. Make sense who may." Even in this slight, rather forced exercise, Beckett is too dense and both grimly and playfully enigmatic to be forced into single meanings.

A number of important writers have succeeded in both fiction and drama, either turning to the theater after having established themselves in prose (Beckett, Ionesco) or alternating between the two throughout (Chekhov, Pirandello). The usual case, though, is for a writer of fiction to *try* the stage and fall flat on his face. Alfred Jarry once said that the difference between writing a story and a play was that in drama one's characters demanded to be "unleashed" in the guise of living beings—actors—whereas in fiction they were content to remain abstract, suggestions rather than palpable creatures. That is as good an insight as I know into the difficulties most novelists have with the stage.

Donald Barthelme is one of the American writers I most admire, and I found admirable things in his play *Great Days*, which had a limited run at the American Place Theater recently. In the end, however, the play bears out Jarry's dictum; its characters don't really feel at home on the stage, don't unquestioningly belong there. I speak of characters, but that's for convenience. The actors speak lines taken from a collection of Barthelme's stories, also called *Great Days*, in which there are no recognizable characters but only voices, figures in a series of shifting, plotless dialogues. Such handicaps make it all the more remarkable that Barthelme has succeeded as well as he has in converting his fiction to the theater.

The play is in seven sections, or scenes, six of them taken from the book—I haven't been able to find the source of the seventh—and they vary greatly in interest. The set is the same for each: a wide, gallery-like, Grecian-looking space, with a pre-Columbian statue at one end, a huge plant with spiky leaves at the other, a long low step at the back and four simple chairs in the center. There are hardly any props and little physical activity—two men carry drinks in one sequence—so that the actors, three men and three women, have almost nothing to do except talk.

The talk is often delicious, with Barthelme's characteristic blend of slang, argot, classical allusions and literary speech. In a segment called "Morning" a man says he's not afraid of life because he has a "smoke detector, tickets to everywhere and a guardian angel." In "Apology" someone says, "There are many ways a grown woman can spend her time. Lace-making. Feeding the Golden Carp. Higher mathematics." And in "The Leap," my favorite, there's a wonderful discussion of faith, which one can "leap away from" as well as toward, and of love, which "allows us to live together, men and women, in small grubby apartments," as well as a number of those lovely

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casual observations with which Barthelme's highly sophisticated, deeply ironic prose is tempered, like "a day when you accidentally notice the sublime."

It isn't enough. If it's a commonplace to say that talk isn't necessarily drama, one still has to say it about *Great Days*. Beckett's stage works are also mostly composed of talk, but they have a dramatic quality, which comes from several sources. One is the sense Beckett conveys of speech struggling with silence, meaning with non-meaning. Another is the older theatrical tradition behind the text; used up, banal, it nevertheless remains as a ghostly presence or a model that's been pared down to essences. Thus a ground of the minimal tension necessary to drama is, in Beckett's plays, the relation we sense between the theatrical past and its present, between what was once said and done and the angular, terse, paradigmatic ways dramatic "stories" have to be constructed now.

The trouble with Barthelme's play, as with his earlier dramatization of his novel *Snow White*, is that for all its rich wit and fine verbal precision, there's little sense of silence pressing against speech and no dimension of tradition denied, refused or played with. Everything comes forward immediately as speech in isolation—clever, wise or affecting as it often is, but without depth—lacking connection to other realities, especially the reality of theater.

The direction was partly at fault. It wouldn't have entirely rescued the production, but it might have helped to have added a good deal of stage business, even though the text makes no provision for it. That way, Barthelme's distillation of complex verbal actuality, so knowing about how we use and pervert language, might have come alive as embodiment and not merely oration. But J. Ranelli directed the play abstractly, as nearly pure speech, with a minimalism that suggested he trusted it to carry itself. The result is not an entity, an organism, but a series of epigrams, a splintering of bright language, a shower of stars. □

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T	R	E	E	T	O	P	■	I	L	L	W	I	L	L
S	■	A	■	E	■	L	■	D	■	A	■	C	■	E
■	■	M	A	R	L	I	N	E	S	P	I	K	E	S
U	■	■	■	■	■	N	■	T	■	■	■	■	■	S
P	U	T	T	I	N	G	G	R	E	E	N	S	■	■
S	■	H	■	M	■	I	■	O	■	R	■	A	■	U
T	R	I	P	P	E	R	■	M	A	R	A	U	D	S
A	■	R	■	U	■	O	■	B	■	A	■	R	■	H
I	N	S	U	L	I	N	■	O	U	T	L	I	N	E
R	■	T	■	S	■	■	■	N	■	I	■	A	■	R
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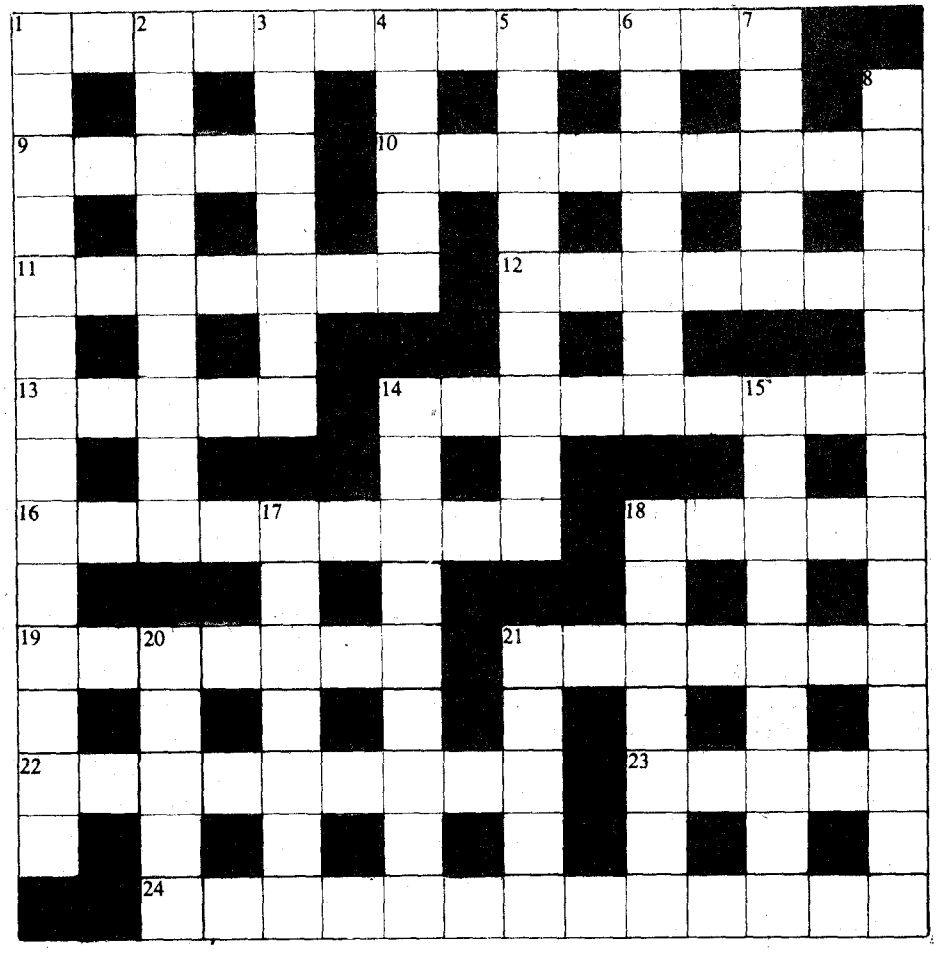

ACROSS

1 Low fellow by degrees, therefore the little teacher winds up loose. (5,8)
9 How an Italian might travel? (With coffee, some find it pleasant.) (5)
10 Not the ring you might have been expected to catch no matter how one plays. (5,4)
11 Alias Mr. Klein—presently in Moscow. (7)
12 Perhaps show the incorrect rate. (7)
13 Comes into contact with groups of hunters, possibly. (5)
14 This, when the alarm goes off? (Pauses en route, too.) (4,5)
16 Trial events? (One might to check the proof.) (4,5)
18 A spot in the Pacific, proving a friend to the French. (5)
19 Are hers cut up with a clipper? (7)
21 Cut back with a dearth of fish. (7)
22 It may be the way to get rid of one flipper. (Strange the fellow isn't in!) (3,3,3)
23 Oddly enough, no tag dance! (5)
24 It suggests beach footwear might be dangerous. (5,8)

DOWN

1 Shoemaker's ball—in place of the so-called mighty man? (10,4)
2 Good advice to hackers? (It might describe a powder.) (9)
3 Isn't exactly so clear, as they might say in sooth. (7)
4 Bird, possibly associated with the forest when hooded. (5)
5 "Flat!" suits bad performers! (9)
6 If not such as the 4 type, they might have squatted someplace. (7)
7 Abstract perhaps from 15, though it seems to have a "nothing" role. (2,3)
8 Why the speech student flunked his Gettysburg test? (The delivery was impossible!) (7,7)
14 Trouble, if it's an overriser! (9)
15 Slick horses? They could make a pretty picture! (3,6)
17 Talk of a mad dog? Sometimes it's wild, and gets in a jam! (7)
18 Expedient, after the body is in state. (7)
20 A way to equip Woden with disguise? (5)
21 Possible area of emancipation? (5)

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